

ABRAHAM LINCOLN



STATUE OF ABRAHAM LINCOLN AT CHICAGO. BY AUGUSTUS ST. GAUDENS.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN

A HISTORY

BY JOHN G. NICOLAY
AND JOHN HAY

VOLUME NINE



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ABRAHAM LINCOLN

CHAPTER I

SHERMAN'S CAMPAIGN TO THE CHATTAHOOCHEE

THE great campaign of 1864 in the West opened with the precision of clockwork at the same moment that Grant crossed the Rapidan and plunged into the wilderness in Virginia. A month before, Grant had communicated to Sherman his entire plan of campaign, telling him with considerable detail all that he expected others to do, but saying to him simply: "You I propose to move against Johnston's army, to break it up and to get into the interior of the enemy's country as far as you can, inflicting all the damage you can against their war resources." Such was the confidence and regard that Grant always showed to his great subordinate, that he did not lay down for him any plan of campaign, but merely intimated the work which it was desirable to have done, leaving him free to execute it in his own way. Sherman answered at once, accepting the task assigned him with "infinite satisfaction." He laid before Grant his proposed plan of campaign, which was for

CHAP. I.

Grant to
Sherman,
April 4, 1864.
Sherman,
"Memoirs,"
Vol. II.,
p. 26.

Apr. 10, 1864.

CHAP. I.

Sherman,
"Memoirs,"
Vol. II,
pp. 27, 28.

Ibid., p. 29.

Ibid., p. 11.

Schofield to advance upon the left, Thomas in the center, and McPherson on the right against Johnston's position at Dalton. There is no sign of diffidence or distrust in his letter; the question of provisions is the only one he considers especially difficult, "but in that," he said, "I must venture. Georgia has a million of inhabitants; if they can live we should not starve." Grant answered on the 19th of April, saying that the principal consideration to be kept in view by both armies was to guard against the concentration of the enemy against either. "With the majority of military commanders," he wrote, "they might do this; but you have had too much experience in traveling light and subsisting upon the country to be caught by any such ruse. I hope my experience has not been thrown away. My directions then would be, if the enemy in your front shows signs of joining Lee follow him up to the full extent of your ability. I will prevent the concentration of Lee in your front if it is in the power of this army to do it."

The question of transportation being the most important one in Sherman's mind, he had issued an order early in April, limiting the use of the railroad cars to transporting only the essential articles of food, ammunition, and supplies for the army, absolutely cutting off all civil traffic; even troops were not allowed to ride in the cars, and beef cattle were driven on their own legs. He estimated the strength of the army with which he should move into Georgia at about 100,000 men and 35,000 animals, and that he would require 130 car-loads of ten tons each to reach Chattanooga daily to insure an adequate supply of food and forage. No such

amount of rolling stock was then in his possession, but he laid a strong hand upon all the cars in his reach, and, like the footsteps that approached the lion's den, none ever went back to their place of departure. The president of the Louisville and Nashville Railroad, finding himself reduced to severe straits from the dearth of cars, protested loudly; but Sherman held firm, and tried to comfort him by telling him to keep his repair shops busy night and day, and that the business of his road would double and quadruple as the waters of the Cumberland fell. A still more earnest protest came from the people of Tennessee, who had already suffered so many hardships during the war and now saw themselves threatened with famine by the action of the Union general. They appealed to the President, who interposed his good word with Sherman in behalf of the Tennesseans. He replied that the railroad could not supply the army and the people too. "One or the other must quit," he said, "and the army don't intend to, unless Joe Johnston makes us." He insisted that the clamor was "partly humbug"; "the issues to citizens have been enormous, and the same weight of corn or oats would have saved thousands of the mules whose carcasses now corduroy the roads." He refused to change his orders, and advised the complainants to make up caravans of cattle and wagons and come over the mountains, by Cumberland and Somerset, to relieve their suffering friends on foot, as they used to do before the railroad was built. He was not insensible to the sufferings of the people, and proposed that the soldiers should divide their rations with them. He asked no one to endure privations

CHAP. I.

Report
Committee
on Conduct
of the War,
1865-66.
Vol. I.,
Supple-
ment, p. 46.

Sherman to
Lincoln,
May 5, 1864.
Ibid., p. 49.

CHAP. I. which he was himself not willing to share. He reduced his own transportation to the minimum, and insisted that all the officers of the army should follow his example. Tents were forbidden to all except the sick and wounded; only one tent was allowed to each headquarters for use as an office. He himself had no tent and allowed none to any of the officers immediately about him. They spread their tent flies over small trees and fence-rails. If he came across a quartermaster who had saved a tent for himself, he took pleasure in depriving him of this illicit luxury, and in sending it to the brigade surgeon for the sick. "I doubt," he says in his "Memoirs," "if any army ever went forth to battle with fewer impedimenta, and where the regular and necessary supplies of food, ammunition, and clothing were issued, as called for, so regularly and so well."

Vol. II.,
p. 22.

Ibid.,
pp. 23, 24.

1864.

When the time for action approached, his army consisted of the following force present for battle: the Army of the Cumberland under Major-General Thomas, 60,773; the Army of the Tennessee under Major-General McPherson, 24,465; the Army of the Ohio under Major-General Schofield, 13,559; in the aggregate, 98,797 men and 254 guns. Some cavalry and two divisions of infantry joined him during the next month. On the 28th of April Sherman received his final orders from Grant to move by the 5th of May. Sherman answered that he would be ready, and on the 1st of May telegraphed that he would agree to draw the enemy's fire within twenty-four hours of May 5, and on that day the great army moved out to begin the memorable campaign.

It had not been the intention of the Confederate authorities to allow the initiative to the National forces. "It was important," says Jefferson Davis, "to guard against the injurious results to the morale of the troops, which always attend a prolonged season of inactivity; but the recovery of the territory in Tennessee and Kentucky which we had been compelled to abandon, and on the supplies of which the proper subsistence of our armies mainly depended, imperatively demanded an onward movement." The Confederate executive was continually impressing upon General Johnston, throughout the spring, the necessity for a forward movement. His army was a formidable one. He had, on the 1st of May, at Dalton, and within easy reach of him, 68,620 men.¹ So anxious was the Confederate Government for a successful campaign in the West, that this large force could have been greatly increased, Confederate writers say, if General Johnston had cordially accepted Mr. Davis's suggestions for an active campaign.

Davis,
"Rise and
Fall of the
Confederate
Government,"
Vol. II.,
p. 548.

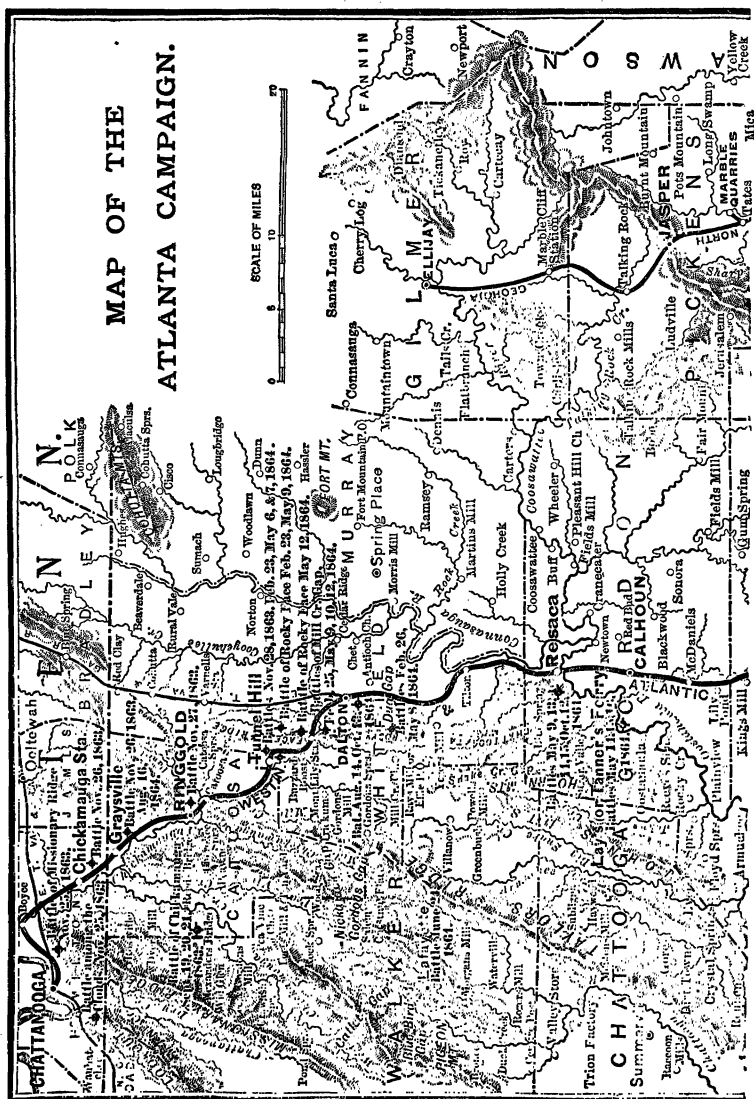
1864.

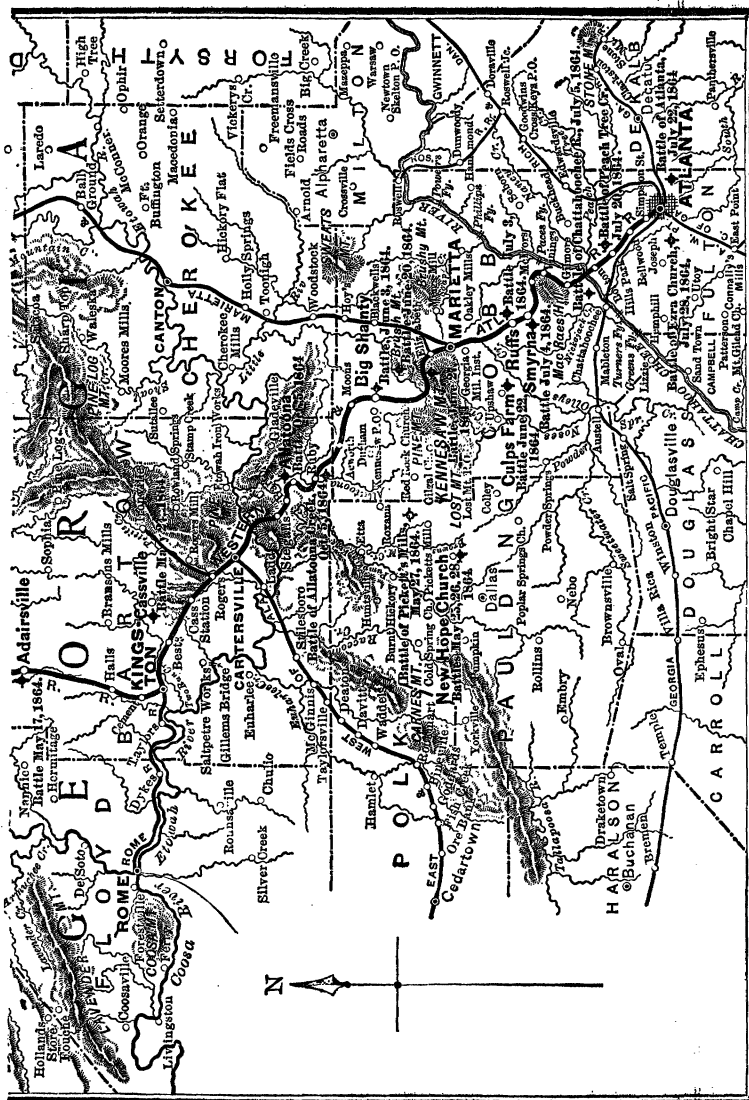
General Bragg wrote to him in the middle of March proposing that he should move across the Tennessee River near Kingston, and that General Longstreet should move simultaneously by the route east and south of Knoxville to form a junction with him near that crossing. This, Bragg thought, would isolate Knoxville and threaten Chattanooga, and would necessitate the withdrawal

¹ This is the estimate by Jefferson Davis ("Rise and Fall of the Confederate Government," Vol. II., p. 551), founded upon General Johnston's own reports. Colonel Kinloch Falconer, General Johnston's Adjutant-Gen-

eral, quoted by General Johnston in his "Narrative," p. 574, substantially confirms this estimate. General Hood, in his "Advance and Retreat," puts the number still higher, though Hood is hardly an impartial witness.

MAP OF THE ATLANTA CAMPAIGN.





FROM "THE MOUNTAIN CAMPAIGNS IN GEORGIA; OR, WAR SCENES ON THE W. & A.," PUBLISHED BY THE WESTERN & ATLANTIC R. R. CO.

CHAP. I.

Johnston,
"Narrative
of Military
Operations,"
pp. 291, 292.

Ibid., p. 294.

of the Federal army to the line of the Cumberland. He suggested at the same time throwing a heavy column of cavalry into West and Middle Tennessee, to operate on the National lines of communications, and, as a result of this, the capture of Nashville and the reclamation of the provision country of Tennessee and Kentucky. But at the time this dispatch was received, Johnston had just heard of Grant's visit to the West, and of Sherman's arrival at Memphis. He expected, therefore, the great Federal effort to be made in that region. "He [Grant] has not come back to Tennessee," he says, "to stand on the defensive. His advance, should we be ready for it, will be advantageous for us." He, therefore, urgently demanded that the troops which had been offered him for an aggressive movement be sent him at once, and used at his discretion; and the same day he wrote to General Bragg, criticizing in his usual clear, sensible, and exasperating manner the plan of campaign which had been laid down for him. He did not think that Knoxville could be isolated in the way suggested; and in this he was perfectly right, for Longstreet, when he had thrust his whole army between Grant and Burnside, had not been able to isolate Knoxville. He believed also that Grant would be ready to act before he was, and that the Confederate forces would have every possible advantage in fighting Grant south instead of north of the Tennessee.

This sensible letter was ill received at Richmond. Johnston was informed that reënforcements could be sent to him only for an advance, and no notice was taken of his protestations that an advance was really what he meant and intended. If he had known

the communications which were going forward to Richmond from his own subordinates, he would have comprehended better the coldness and distrust with which he was regarded by the Confederate authorities. General Hood wrote to Bragg on the 13th of April: "I am sorry to inform you that I have done all in my power to induce General Johnston to accept the proposition you made to move forward. He will not consent, as he desires the troops to be sent here, and it be left to him as to what use shall be made of them. I regret this exceedingly, as my heart was fixed on going to the front and regaining Tennessee and Kentucky. . . . When we are to be in better condition to drive the enemy from our country I am not able to comprehend." Hood was an especial favorite both of Bragg and Jefferson Davis, and these misleading accusations still further increased the prejudice under which General Johnston suffered at Richmond. All through the latter part of April the signs of a forward movement in Sherman's camp were evident to Johnston, and constantly reported to Bragg, who, even so late as the 2d of May, suggested to Johnston that he was probably deceived by mere demonstrations made for the purpose.

The position which General Johnston occupied in front of Dalton was not one which had been originally selected by him. Bragg's army, in its desperate flight from Missionary Ridge, had simply dropped there in its fatigue, and intrenched itself where it happened to camp, but during the winter and spring the position had been made excessively strong by fortifications. Dalton is guarded on the left and north by a wall of quartz rock called

CHAP. I.

1864.

J. B. Hood,
"Advance
and
Retreat,"
p. 94.

Johnston,
"Narrative
of Military
Operations,"
p. 302.

CHAP. I.

May, 1864.

Rocky Face Ridge. It is traversed by a gorge called the Buzzard's Roost, through which runs a little stream called Mill Creek. When Sherman arrived on the 7th in front of this formidable barrier, the summit and the sides of Rocky Face were one continuous mass of bristling batteries. Mill Creek had been dammed, and a considerable body of water offered an additional protection to the gap of Buzzard's Roost. It would have been an unpar-donable enterprise for any general to dash his army against such impregnable obstacles. Yet it is clear that Johnston expected Sherman to do this, and it is equally clear that Sherman, during the previous month, had seriously contemplated an assault of Johnston in that position; but when in the immediate presence of the position Sherman wisely changed his mind, and, contenting himself with a strong demonstration in front of Johnston's lines, he sent General McPherson with the Army of the Tennessee through Snake Creek Gap against Resaca.

General Johnston expected Sherman's principal attack to be made on his front at Dalton, and he therefore concentrated the full strength of his army at that point, leaving the protection of his communications to General Polk's troops, then on their way from Alabama to join him. He reasoned that it was Sherman's true policy to get a battle out of him as soon as he could, and to have it as near the Northern, and as far from the Southern, base as possible; and there is no question that if Sherman had not found Johnston's position so strong naturally, and so admirably defended, he would have made the serious attack the Confeder-

Johnston,
"Narrative
of Military
Operations,"
p. 317.

ate general expected, and left to McPherson, in case of victory, the duty of striking the flank of the retreating Confederate column. The vigor and energy with which, during the 9th and 10th, the armies of Thomas and Schofield pressed Johnston's front at all points confirmed the Confederate commander in his theory that he was to fight his battle there. Secure in his formidable works and commanding position, and encouraged by the success with which he baffled every attempt of the National troops to pierce his lines, he waited during three days for the supreme assault. The attack of Hooker, Palmer, and Howard in front of Buzzard's Roost was constantly kept up with strong skirmish-lines. Harker's brigade of the Fourth Corps made a gallant assault on the north crest of Rocky Face; Schofield pushed the divisions of J. D. Cox and Hovey up to the fortifications extending across the valley north of Dalton; but everywhere the works were found excessively strong; and at last, as General Cox, who took part in the engagement, says, "It became apparent, even to the most daring, that it was useless to lead men against such barriers. The orders were not to waste life in serious assaults upon intrenchments; but the zeal of the troops and subordinate commanders turned the intended skirmish into something very like a ranged battle."

CHAP. I.

May, 1864.

Jacob D.
Cox,
"Atlanta,"
p. 38.

Meanwhile McPherson in pursuance of his orders marched through Snake Creek Gap on the 9th of May. This is a wild and narrow defile, about six miles long; the road was merely the bed of a dry stream, almost impracticable for wagons, shut in by beetling cliffs on either side, and dark as twilight even at midday. A little distance from its eastern

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entrance stands the village of Resaca. It had been fortified beforehand by the Confederates, and two brigades under General Cantey had arrived from the South exactly in time to hold it against McPherson's advance. The ground was admirably adapted for a large intrenched camp. In front a rivulet called Camp Creek flows into the Oostanaula just west of the village. The left of the Confederate position thus rested securely on the river. Its front was guarded by Camp Creek, along whose bank the line ran to the north and turned to the east across the railroad running to Dalton, and rested upon the Connasauga River, which flows into the Oostanaula a few miles east of Resaca. McPherson, finding the Confederate force strongly posted and intrenched between the mouth of the Gap and the railroad, not knowing how strongly it might be supported, nor exactly informed of the whereabouts of Johnston's army, and concluding that the works were too strong to be carried by a *coup de main*, took a strong position at the southern mouth of the Gap, where he secured his force by improvised intrenchments and reported the situation to Sherman.

General Sherman afterwards showed great disappointment at this action of McPherson's, and even in his "Memoirs" censures him for not having stormed the works in his front and seized the railroad. At the same time he does McPherson the justice to say that he acted according to his instructions, and in fact he so reported to Halleck on the 10th of May. He had by this time become convinced that Buzzard's Roost Gap was naturally and artificially too strong to be attempted, and had re-

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solved to feign at that point, but to move the bulk of his army by the right flank through Snake Creek Gap and place himself, if possible, between Johnston and Resaca; but Johnston on the other hand had no fear of being cut off by this manœuvre; even when he began to suspect it, he considered his camp well defended by James Cantey's division; and on the 11th, when Sherman's march towards Snake Creek Gap was begun, the strength of the intrenched camp was much greater and the number of the garrison had been increased from two to thirteen brigades by the arrival of the rest of Polk's corps from the South.

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Sherman's army moved by the right at daybreak on the 12th, leaving only Howard's corps and Stoneman's cavalry to keep up a show of force in front of Dalton and to pursue Johnston if he should retreat. He learned by a reconnaissance under Wheeler of the departure of Sherman, and was duly informed by Polk of the arrival of a heavy column through Snake Creek Gap on the 12th. He evacuated Dalton that night, and speedily concentrated his entire force at Resaca. Howard followed his rear on the morning of the 13th, capturing some prisoners at Dalton and along the road, and joined Sherman's left in the course of the day. A series of skirmishes, so sharp and destructive as to deserve the name of battles, now took place between the opposing armies on either side of Camp Creek during the 14th and 15th of May. Each side fought with equal vigor and enterprise, the Confederates being protected by their works, by their position, and by the nature of the ground over which the fighting was done. The

CHAP. I. losses on both sides were considerable, Sherman's being, of course, the heavier; but while he was pressing the Confederate forces in his front, he was as usual stretching out his line and demonstrating in the enemy's rear. Sweeny's division crossed the Oostenaula on the morning of the 15th, intrenched itself, and bridged the river.

May, 1864.

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on Conduct
of the War.
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ment,
p. 63.

Johnston,
"Narrative
of Military
Opera-
tions,"
p. 319.

Ibid., p. 320.

General Johnston, on receiving this news, felt that further delay would be fatal, and therefore withdrew during the night of the 15th, burning his bridges behind him. This, however, occasioned Sherman little delay. He had telegraphed during the day, "We intend to fight Joe Johnston until he is satisfied, and I hope he will not attempt to escape. If he does, my bridges are down, and we will be after him." The next day he entered Resaca and was astonished at the strength of the position and the elaborate works which had been abandoned. But, without a moment's delay, he pushed his forces over the river in pursuit of the enemy. Johnston intended to make a stand near Calhoun; but it is singular that on arriving there, although he had been encamped so long in that region, he found no suitable ground for fighting. He retired next to Adairsville, where, according to his maps, the valley of the Oothcaloga was so narrow that he expected his army, formed in order of battle across it, would hold the heights on the right and left with its flanks. But, what seems almost incredible, his maps again failed him, and he found that he could here obtain no advantage of ground; so, after a rest of eighteen hours, his troops fell back to Cassville. At Adairsville the roads leading south diverge; one follows the railroad to King-

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ston, the other runs in a straight line through Cassville to a bridge over the Etowah River; the railroad turns east at Kingston and crosses the Etowah about twelve miles away, Cassville lying some two miles north of the road and about six miles from Kingston. Both armies divided at Adairsville. Johnston marched Polk and Hood directly to Cassville and Hardee to Kingston. Thomas marched after Hardee, and Hooker and Schofield moved direct upon Cassville. This was the finest opportunity which had been presented to Johnston, during the campaign, of beating the enemy in detail. Sherman's principal force had followed Hardee to Kingston, and Johnston, in high hopes, ordered Hood and Polk on the 18th to march out of Cassville and try to crush Sherman's left wing north of that place. The movement came to nothing, on account, as Johnston says, of the lack of harmonious coöperation between Hood and Polk. No attack was made upon Schofield's advancing column, and the sound of the Federal artillery chasing Hardee out of Kingston convinced General Johnston that he was to have the whole of Sherman's army on his hands at once. He fell back to the ridge immediately south of Cassville, which he says was the best position he saw occupied during the war; "with a broad, open, elevated valley in front of it, completely commanded by the fire of troops occupying its crest."

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Johnston,
"Narrative
of Military
Operations,"
p. 322.

Here at last he halted on the evening of the 19th of May, expecting to receive and hoping to repulse Sherman's attack the next morning. But soon after dark he received an invitation to meet his lieutenant-generals at Polk's headquarters, and

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going there found Polk and Hood, who informed him, to his bitter chagrin and dismay, that neither of their corps would be able to hold its position next day, because, as they said, a part of each was enfiladed by Federal artillery. He says that both generals agreed in urging him to abandon the ground and cross the Etowah. General Hood, in his account of this interview, does not deny that he said the ground was untenable, but insists that he urged going forward to attack the enemy instead of waiting his attack upon that ground. General Hardee, on the contrary, who was present at the latter part of the interview, confirms the statement of General Johnston. "Although the position," says Johnston, "was the best we had occupied, I yielded at last in the belief that the confidence of the commanders of two of the three corps of the army of their inability to resist the enemy would inevitably be communicated to their troops, and produce that inability. Lieutenant-General Hardee, who arrived after this decision, remonstrated against it strongly, and was confident that his corps could hold its ground, although less favorably posted. The error was adhered to however and the position abandoned before daybreak."

Johnston,
"Narrative
of Military
Operations,"
p. 324.

General Sherman had already come into possession of Johnston's General Order announcing to the Confederate troops that their retreat was at an end, and that they were now to give battle to their enemy; he, therefore, expected to enjoy that morning the opportunity for a decisive engagement, which he had so eagerly sought for the past week; but he found only an empty camp before him. He had been excessively anxious to bring Johnston



GENERAL WILLIAM J. HARDEE.

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to battle. The division of his forces at Adairsville and their rapid movement forward in two columns had been occasioned by his intense desire to lose no opportunity to strike the enemy. He said to Schofield on the evening of the 18th: "If we can bring Johnston to battle this side of Etowah, we must do it, even at the hazard of beginning battle with but a part of our forces." On the 20th of May a rapid pursuit was made, but Johnston had gained such a start in the night that he was able to cross the Etowah River without serious molestation. The first stage of the great campaign was ended. A large extent of country had been won from the Confederates by the capture of the towns of Kingston and Rome; and a large quantity of material of inestimable value to the rebels was captured and destroyed.

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ment, p. 68.

Sherman, with his usual restless energy, lost not a moment's time at the Etowah. He established his new base of supplies at Kingston, bridging the river with that marvelous alacrity which had become a matter of habit to his army, and at once started in hot pursuit of the enemy. He had, however, now come to a part of the country with which he was familiar, having journeyed over this region twenty years before, when he was a young lieutenant of artillery. Between the town of Marietta and the Etowah River the road runs through a wild and difficult defile called the Allatoona Pass, and Sherman determined that, instead of pursuing through this rough and easily defensible road, he would turn it on the right by marching from Kingston to Marietta by way of Dallas. McPherson had the right wing; Thomas was on the main road in the center, Hooker's corps leading, and Schofield

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had the left rear. But Johnston, whose vigilance throughout this entire campaign was unsleeping, became at once aware of this movement, and Sherman, on the other hand, had the good fortune of capturing a cavalry picket who had on his person an order from Johnston which showed he was aware of the march and direction of the National army; and it was, therefore, with a perfect knowledge of each other's intentions that the two armies met on the 25th of May at the cross-roads called New Hope Church, about four miles north-east of Dallas.

General Geary's division of Hooker's corps first struck Hood's command, forming the right of the Confederate force, in its hastily prepared intrenchments, and although he attacked with great vigor and energy he had gained no ground by nightfall. During the night the Confederates greatly strengthened their position, and Johnston got his forces so well in hand — Hood holding the right, Polk the center, and Hardee the extreme left, where he was opposed by McPherson — that in the morning, when Sherman brought up his entire force, he was unable to make any impression upon the strong lines of the Confederates. A continuous skirmishing fight, varied by several movements on each side, which at times took on the dimensions of a battle, filled the whole day of the 26th. Whenever either side left its intrenchments to assail the other, it was repulsed, and although there was considerable loss of life, no especial advantage was gained by anybody. But by evening of that day it was clear to Sherman that the road to Allatoona was now open to him; he had only to hold his

intrenchments with a part of his force and move the rest, by the left flank, to the railroad. He ordered McPherson to disengage himself from Hardee, and close up on Hooker, but, like many a hero of pioneer history, McPherson found that letting go of a wild cat was no easy task. The moment he turned from his intrenchments, on the morning of the 28th, Hardee was upon him. A furious battle took place, at the end of which, although he had repulsed his assailant and held his ground, he found it still very difficult to retire. It was not until the 1st of June that he was able to bring off his army and effect a junction with Hooker at New Hope.

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But all this while Thomas and Schofield were extending towards the left and approaching the railroad. Each side held its lines in the midst of a skirmish fire so hot and malignant that the soldiers christened the unhallowed neighborhood by the name of "Hell Hole." Holding his right in close contact with the enemy's position, Sherman gradually worked to the left until his strong infantry line had reached and secured possession of all the wagon roads to Ackworth. By this means the pass of Allatoona fell into his possession without further trouble, and he at once gave orders to repair the railroad from Kingston to that point and put the bridges over the Etowah in good order. Johnston, seeing that Sherman had accomplished his purpose, and having no further object in holding the lines at New Hope, evacuated that position and fell back to the lofty stronghold formed by a triangle of mountains, the northern apex of which was Pine Mountain; the base ran from Lost

Sherman,
"Memoirs."
Vol. II.,
pp. 44, 45.

CHAP. I. Mountain on the west to Kenesaw on the east, behind which lay the town of Marietta. Sherman established his new line directly north of Johnston's position, his left, under McPherson, holding the railroad; Thomas, in the center, obliqued to the right, deploying below Kenesaw and facing Pine Mountain; and Schofield on the general right towards Lost Mountain.

1864. By the 11th of June the Etowah bridge was done, but active operations were rendered impossible for several days by pouring rains. On the 14th the rains slackened, and Sherman reconnoitered the position between Kenesaw and Pine Mountain with the purpose of attempting a breach in the lines. At the same moment General Johnston, with General Polk and some other officers, rode up to Pine Mountain to examine the ground with a view of retiring the troops from that position, which he thought too much exposed. Sherman, observing the group on the opposite hill, gave orders to the artillery to fire a few volleys so as to compel the enemy to keep under cover. At the second shot fired General Polk was killed. His place was temporarily filled by General W. W. Loring, and afterwards permanently by Lieutenant-General A. P. Stewart. The next day Johnston evacuated Pine Mountain, which was immediately occupied by Sherman, and the National lines were extended to the immediate front of the Confederates, which now stretched across from Kenesaw to Lost Mountain. The new position was so closely pressed at every point by Thomas, McPherson, and Schofield that Johnston, becoming convinced his lines were too extended to be safe in case of the assault which he

Sherman,
"Memoirs,"
Vol. II.,
pp. 51, 52.

foresaw, abandoned six miles of strong field works and fell back to an intrenched line nearer to Marietta.

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In his new position, General Hood's corps covered Marietta on the northeast, Loring holding Kenesaw Mountain, and Hardee holding the left to the road which ran between Marietta and Lost Mountain. The bold front of Kenesaw formed the salient of his line, and the flanks were refused on both sides, covering Marietta and his communications. Not only was the position one of great strength, but it had been fortified with the utmost care for months before. All the available slave labor had been bestowed upon it, and now the army under experienced engineers added the finishing touches until it seemed, as on trial it turned out to be, impregnable. But if on the one hand the position of Johnston was now too formidable to be attacked with prudence, on the other hand it was so compact that Sherman was perfectly able to hold him tight within his intrenchments with a portion of his force, and to feel round one or the other flank for his communications. In spite of bad weather, which lasted for three weeks, he made constant progress on his right wing, until at last Johnston became seriously disquieted as to his safety from that quarter. If Sherman had persevered but a few days longer in this course, he would have had Kenesaw without a struggle. Johnston was already constructing two lines of defense in case of retreat, one ten miles south of Marietta, and another on the high ground on the river, covering the approaches to the railroad bridge and Turner's Ferry.

Johnston,
"Narrative
of Military
Operations,"
p. 345.

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Sherman made an important forward movement on his right on the 22d of June, pushing Hooker forward to the Kulp House; but, as usual, Johnston's vigilance had been equal to every demand upon it, and he had posted General Hood at the threatened point with a heavy force. Hood attacked with his usual fury, and although he was soundly whipped and driven back with great loss, it was a certain disappointment to Sherman to find so heavy a force upon the ground. Heavy as it was, Hooker greatly exaggerated it in his dispatch announcing the engagement, saying that three entire corps were in his front. For this and other reasons Sherman rebuked him, and their relations were never afterwards cordial.

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For some motive, for which General Sherman has never given any adequate explanation, he now resolved to assault Johnston's position in front. This desperate enterprise was ordered for the 27th of June. McPherson was directed to assault near Kenesaw, and Thomas about a mile to the south in front of the ground occupied by the Fourth Corps. Davis's and Newton's divisions were designated by Thomas to form the assaulting column. The point chosen for the attack was a salient in Johnston's works, which was selected because the ground in front was comparatively open. At eight o'clock in the morning, under cover of a heavy artillery fire, the brigades of Daniel McCook and John G. Mitchell leaped over their intrenchments and rushed for the enemy's works under a terrible fire of artillery and musketry. They went forward in splendid order about six hundred yards, and only halted when they reached the Confederate intrenchments.

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The attempt was here seen to be hopeless ; such was the strength of the works, so heavy had been the loss of the assaulting column, and so great the exhaustion of those who reached the enemy's parapets that no attempt was made to carry them ; but even in this desperate situation they did not retreat. Thomas ordered General Davis to hold the position and fortify it ; intrenching tools were at once sent forward, and only a few yards from the Confederate works, under a terrible fire, this heroic column intrenched itself and held the ground it had gained. The loss had been frightful. Daniel McCook was killed, Colonel Oscar F. Harmon, next in rank, fell immediately afterwards. Newton's division met with no better success. They were held by formidable obstructions and entanglements and a most destructive fire. He, therefore, withdrew his division. General Charles G. Harker was killed, and the loss in his brigade and in George D. Wagner's was very great. The attack was made with energy, and some of his men were killed on the parapets. On McPherson's front the operations amounted to nothing more than a strong demonstration against a spur of Little Kenesaw ; he gained some ground but did not break the Confederate line.

It was difficult for Sherman to admit that the attack had failed. Until nearly noon, he was still urging Thomas to break through the line, if possible. "It is easier now than it will be hereafter," he said. At 2 : 25 in the afternoon, when he ordered Thomas to secure what advantageous ground he had gained, Thomas, smarting under the sense of a useless sacrifice of his soldiers, replied that he

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Van Horne,
"Army of
the Cum-
berland."
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p. 103.

still held all the ground he had gained and the division commanders reported their ability to hold, and added, "we have already lost heavily to-day without gaining any material advantage. One or two more such assaults would use up this army." In the evening Sherman, not in the least shaken by the day's bad fortune, but ready, as usual, to admit the fact of the failure, and to adopt some other course, suggested a move on Fulton, cutting loose from the railroad. Thomas, with unusual sullenness, replied, "I think it decidedly better than butting against breastworks twelve feet thick."

Ibid., p. 104.

Vol. II.,
pp. 60, 61.

July 9, 1864.

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ment,
p. 114.

Sherman, unlike Grant at Cold Harbor, never admitted that his assault at Kenesaw was a mistake. In his "Memoirs" and in his report, as well as in his letters to Halleck and Grant, he stoutly defends it. To Halleck, he says, "I had to do it. The enemy and our own army and officers had settled down into the conviction that the assault of lines formed no part of my game, and the moment the enemy was found behind anything like a parapet, why everybody would deploy, throw up counterworks, and take it easy, leaving it to the 'old man' to turn the position." To Grant he said, "I regarded an assault on the 27th of June necessary for two good reasons: first, because the enemy as well as my own army had settled down into the belief that 'flanking' alone was my game; and second, that, on that day and ground, had the assault succeeded I could have broken Johnston's center and pushed his army back in confusion, and with great loss, to his bridges over the Chatahoochee."

July 12,
1864.
Ibid., p. 122.

The losses in this costly battle were twenty-five

hundred on the Union side. Johnston admits a loss of about five hundred and finds it difficult to believe that Sherman's loss is as small as we have stated. He seems to think that it would not be quite creditable to Sherman's army to have lost only two and a half per cent. of its force in this desperate attack. But only a few brigades were actually engaged; the forests, except in a very few exposed places, ran up almost to the abatis of the Confederate works, and the troops forming the column of attack had so much experience and intelligence that they sought cover the moment it was clearly shown that the work assigned them was impossible.

Johnston,
"Narrative
of Military
Operations,"
p. 344.

The only advantage of the bloody day's work was the advance made by Cox's division of Schofield's corps beyond Olley's Creek, which amounted to a virtual flanking of Johnston's position. The moment Sherman began to shift his troops to the right with a view to a movement on the Chattahoochee, Johnston withdrew his army to a position which had been prepared in advance at Smyrna; and Sherman, rising at the earliest dawn of the 3d of July, and scanning the crest of Kenesaw with a glass, saw his pickets cautiously crawling to the top of the mountain and running excitedly along the abandoned crest. He started his staff in every direction to order a keen pursuit. He rode at once into Marietta, where he concentrated his army to follow Johnston. He issued the most vehement orders to his subordinates to lose not an instant so as to catch Johnston before he reached the Chattahoochee. To McPherson he said, "If you ever worked in your life, work at daybreak to-morrow on the

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ment,
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flank, crossing Nickajack somehow, and the moment you discover confusion pour in your fire"; to Thomas he said, "We will never have such a chance again, and I want you to impress on Hooker, Howard, and Palmer the importance of the most intense energy of attack to-night and in the morning, and to press with vehemence at any cost of life and material. Every inch of his line should be felt and the moment there is a give, pursuit should be made. . . You know what loss would ensue to Johnston if he crosses his bridges at night in confusion, with artillery thundering at random on his rear."

Ibid., p. 104.

But there was no confusion, and, properly speaking, nothing like flight in the Confederate army. Johnston retired at his leisure to Smyrna Camp-ground and there halted, keeping back Sherman's advance until he had his trains safely collected by the bridges of the Chattahoochee. The 4th of July was celebrated, as Sherman says, by "a noisy but not a desperate battle," and during the night Johnston withdrew his army and his trains inside his tête de pont at the Chattahoochee, which Sherman says was one of the strongest pieces of field fortifications he ever saw. Here he stood defiantly. The existence of this powerful work was entirely unsuspected by Sherman and, of course, frustrated his hope of catching Johnston in confusion at the crossing of the Chattahoochee. Not wishing to repeat the costly experiment of the 27th of June, he refrained from assaulting the work, but spread his wings on either side far up and down the river, threatening strongly on the right at a point where a curve of the Chattahoochee brought him nearer

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to Atlanta than Johnston was; at the same time searching the fords thoroughly on the left until he found two eligible places at Rosswell and at Soap's Ferry, where he crossed two divisions¹ and intrenched strongly on the other side. He had previously dispatched southward General Rousseau, who, with a cavalry force of some two thousand men, started from Decatur on the 8th of July across the Coosa, struck the railroad west of Opelika, destroyed it for twenty miles and returned with his command safe, having several hundred captured mules and horses, and reported to Sherman south of the river.

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Of course as soon as Johnston learned of the establishment of a heavy force by Sherman south of the Chattahoochee on his right flank, he saw that his position was no longer tenable on the north of that river. He evacuated his trenches during the night of the 9th of July, burning the bridges and carrying his pontoons with him. Sherman spent a few days in strengthening the several points for the passage of the river, increasing the number and capacity of his bridges, rearranging the garrisons to his rear and bringing forward supplies. General Frank Blair with the Seventeenth Corps had joined him, and the army was as strong as when it left Chattanooga. His army was at this time about double that of Johnston, the proper proportion which should always obtain between an army of invasion, subject to constant depletion by the necessary demands for detachments for the guarding of communications, and an army of defense

Sherman,
"Memoirs."
Vol. II.,
p. 71.

¹ Kenner Garrard's cavalry at Rosswell and Cox's division of Schofield's army at Soap's Creek.

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which can avail itself of all the natural features of the country and can generally choose its time of fighting behind intrenchments. It is difficult to ascertain the precise numbers of the two armies, but they were not far on either side from 100,000 and 50,000. The power of Johnston had relatively decreased, and that of Sherman had slowly gained, in the long and destructive march from the Tennessee line to the heart of Georgia. Johnston's losses during the month of May were about 9500; during the month of June about 7000. Jefferson Davis and General Hood represent Johnston's losses as much heavier than these, but this is an instance where the personal prejudice of these writers leads them into the unusual error of exaggerating Confederate losses. The casualties of Sherman's army for the month of May were about 9000; for the month of June 7500. The aggregate on each side is large, yet when it is considered that almost every day of these two months had witnessed either a battle or continuous hot skirmishing, the wonder is that the casualties were so few.

CHAPTER II

THE CLEVELAND CONVENTION

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BEFORE the snows melted, it had become evident to the most narrow and malignant of Mr. Lincoln's opponents that nothing could prevent his renomination by the Republican Convention which was to meet at Baltimore in June. There was no voice of opposition to him in any organized Republican assembly, except in Missouri; and even there the large majority of radical Republicans were willing to accept the universal verdict of their party; but there were a few earnest spirits scattered throughout the country to whom opposition to the Administration had become the habit of a lifetime. There were others not so honest who for personal reasons disliked the President. To these it was impossible to stand quietly by and see Mr. Lincoln made his own successor without one last effort to prevent it. The result of informal consultations among them was the publication of a number of independent calls for a mass convention of the people to meet at Cleveland, Ohio, on the 31st of May, a week before the assembling of the Republican Convention at Baltimore.

The two centers of this disaffection were in St. Louis and New York. In the former city it was composed of a small fraction of a faction. The

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large majority of those radical politicians who had been for two years engaged in the bitter struggle with Blair and his associates still retained their connection with the Republican party, and had no intention of breaking off their relations with the Union party of the nation. It was a small fraction of their number which issued its call to the disaffected throughout the nation. Harking back to the original cause of quarrel, they had attached themselves blindly to the personal fortunes of General Frémont; they now put themselves in communication with a small club of like-minded enthusiasts in New York called the "Central Frémont Club," and invited their radical fellow-citizens to meet them in convention at Cleveland. They made no pretense of any purpose of consultation or of independent individual action. The object stated in their call was "in order then and there to recommend the nomination of John C. Frémont for the Presidency of the United States, and to assist in organizing for his election." They denounced "the imbecile and vacillating policy of the present Administration in the conduct of the war, . . . its treachery to justice, freedom, and genuine democratic principles in its plan of reconstruction, whereby the honor and dignity of the nation have been sacrificed to conciliate the still existing and arrogant slave power, and to further the ends of an unscrupulous partisan ambition"; they demanded "the immediate extinction of slavery throughout the whole United States, by congressional action, the absolute equality of all men before the law," and a vigorous execution of the laws confiscating the property of rebels.

This circular was stronger in its epithets than in its signatures; the names of the signers were, as a rule, unknown to fame. One column was headed by the name of the Rev. George B. Cheever, another by the apparently farcical signature of Pantaleon Candidus. Perhaps the most important name affixed to this document was that of Elizabeth Cady Stanton, who wrote, desiring to sign her name to the call; "taking it for granted," she said, "you use 'men' in its largest sense." She informed the committee that they had "lifted politics into the sphere of morals and religion, and made it the duty of all true men and women to unite with them in building up the New Nation." She spelled "new nation" with capital letters, and gave occasion for a malicious accusation that her letter was merely an advertisement of a radical Frémont paper of that name which was then leading a precarious existence in New York. Samuel Bowles inferred from her letter that the convention was to be composed of "the gentler sex of both genders."

Another call was issued by the People's Committee of St. Louis, though signed by individuals from several other States. These gentlemen felt themselves "impelled on our own responsibility to declare to the people that the time has come for all independent men, jealous of their liberties and of the national greatness, to confer together and unite to resist the swelling invasion of an open, shameless, and unrestrained patronage, which threatens to engulf under its destructive wave the rights of the people, the liberty and dignity of the nation"; declaring that they did not recognize in the Balti-

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more Convention the essential conditions of a truly national convention. It was to be held, they thought, too near Washington and too far from the center of the country; its mode of convocation giving no guarantee of wise and honest deliberation. This circular was signed by B. Gratz Brown of Missouri and by a number of old-time abolitionists in the East, though its principal signers were from the ranks of the most vehement German radicals of St. Louis. Still another call was drawn up and issued by Lucius Robinson, Controller of the State of New York, and others. The terms of this address were properly applicable to all the Administration Republicans. It called upon the "citizens of the United States who mean to uphold the Union, who believe that the Rebellion can be suppressed without infringing the rights of individuals or of States, who regard the extinction of slavery as among the practical effects of the war for the Union, and favor an amendment of the Federal Constitution for the exclusion of slavery, and who demand integrity and economy in the administration of Government."

The signers of this call approached the question from an entirely different point of view from that of the radical Germans of St. Louis. In their view Mr. Lincoln, instead of being a craven and a laggard, was going entirely too fast and too far. Their favorite candidate was General Grant. Wendell Phillips, the stormy petrel of all our political disturbances, found enjoyment even in this teapot tempest. He strongly approved the Convention at Cleveland, and constructed beforehand a brief platform for it. "Subdue the South



WENDELL PHILLIPS.

as rapidly as possible. The moment territory comes under our flag reconstruct States thus: confiscate and divide the lands of rebels; extend the right of suffrage broadly as possible to whites and blacks; let the Federal Constitution prohibit slavery throughout the Union, and forbid the States to make any distinction among their citizens on account of color or race." He also advised the nomination "for the Presidency, [of] a statesman and a patriot"; by which terms he intended to exclude Mr. Lincoln.

Phillips to
Stallo,
April 21,
1864.

The Convention might have met, deliberated, and adjourned for all the people of the United States cared about it, had it not been for the violent and enthusiastic admiration it excited in Democratic newspapers and the wide publicity they gave to its proceedings. They described it as a gathering of the utmost dignity and importance; they pretended to discern in it a distinct line of cleavage through the middle of the Republican party. For several days before it assembled they published imaginary dispatches from Cleveland representing the streets and hotels as crowded with a throng of earnest patriots determined on the destruction of the tyrant Lincoln. The papers of Cleveland tell another story. There was no sign of political upheaval in the streets or hotels of that beautiful and thriving city. Up to the very day of the meeting of the Convention there was no place provided for it, and when the first stragglers began to arrive they found no preparation made to receive them. All the public halls of any consequence were engaged, and the Convention at last took shelter in a small room called "Chapin's Hall." Its utmost ca-

CHAP. II. pacity was five or six hundred persons, and it was much too large for the Convention ; delegates and spectators together were never numerous enough to fill it. The delegates were for the most part Germans from St. Louis. They held a preliminary meeting the night before the Convention opened, and passed vigorous and loyal resolutions of the usual character. To the resolution that the Rebellion must be put down, some one moved to amend by adding the words, "with God's assistance," which was voted down with boisterous demonstrations. *Non tali auxilio* was the sentiment of those materialist Missourians.

May 31,
1864.

The Convention met at 10 o'clock in a hall only half filled. Hoping for later arrivals, they delayed organization until nearly noon. The leaders who had been expected to give character and direction to the movement did not appear. It was hoped until the last moment that Mr. Greeley would be present, though he had never given any authority for such an expectation. He said, in answer to an inquiry, that "the only convention he took any interest in was that one Grant was holding before Richmond." B. Gratz Brown, the real head of the movement, was also absent. Emil Pretorius and Mr. Cheever, who, from the two extremities of the country had talked most loudly in favor of the Convention, staid away. The only persons present whose names were at all known were General John Cochrane of New York ; Colonel Charles E. Moss, a noisy politician from Missouri ; Caspar Butz of Illinois ; two or three of the old-school abolitionists, and several (not the weightiest) members of the staff of General Frémont. The delegates from the Ger-

man Workingmen's Union of Chicago were discredited in advance by the publication of a card from the majority of the association they pretended to represent, declaring their intention to support the nominees of the Baltimore Convention. Some one moved, as usual, the appointment of a committee on credentials; but as no one had any valid credentials, it was resolved instead to appoint a committee to enroll the names of the delegates. No action was taken even upon this proposition, because the act of enrollment would have been too fatal a confession of weakness. The committee on organization reported the name of General Cochrane for President of the Convention, who made a discreet and moderate speech. He was a man of too much native amiability of character to feel personal bitterness towards any one, and too adroit and experienced a politician to commit himself irrevocably against any contingency. He had, in fact, thrown an anchor to windward by visiting Mr. Lincoln before the Convention met and assuring him of his continued friendship.

A delegate from Iowa, who seemed to have taken the Convention seriously, then offered a resolution that no member of it should hold, or apply for, office under the next Administration—a proposition which was incontinently smothered. While waiting for the report of the committee on the platform, speeches were made by several delegates. David Plumb attacked Mr. Lincoln as a pro-slavery politician. Colonel Moss of Missouri denounced him as the principal obstacle to freedom in America. A debate now arose on the proposition of the committee on rules that in voting for President the

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1864.

vote should be by States according to their representation in Congress. This was in the interest of the Grant delegates and was violently opposed by the Missourians, who ruled the Convention, and had come for no purpose but to nominate Frémont.

In the course of this debate the somewhat dreary proceedings were enlivened by a comic incident. A middle-aged man, who gave his name as Carr, addressed the chair, saying that he had come from Illinois as a delegate under the last call and did not want to be favored "a single mite." His ideas not flowing readily, he repeated this declaration three times in a voice continually rising in shrillness with his excitement. Something in his tone stirred the risibles of the Convention, and loud laughter saluted the Illinoisan. As soon as he could make himself heard he cried out, "These are solemn times." This statement was greeted with another laugh, and the delegate now shouted at the top of his voice, "I believe there is a God who holds the universe in his hand as you would hold an egg." This comprehensive scheme of theocracy was too much for the Missouri agnostics, and the Convention broke out in a tumult of jeers and roars. The rural delegate, amazed at the reception of his confession of faith, and apparently in doubt whether he had not stumbled by accident into a lunatic asylum, paused, and asked the chairman in a tone of great seriousness whether he believed in a God. The wildest merriment now took possession of the assembly, in the midst of which the Illinois theist solemnly marched down the aisle and out of the house, shaking from his feet the dust of that unbelieving Convention.

As soon as the laughing died away the committee on resolutions reported a set of judicious and, on the whole, undeniable propositions, such as, the Union must and shall be preserved, the constitutional laws of the United States must be obeyed, the Rebellion must be suppressed by force of arms and without compromise. The platform did not greatly differ from that subsequently adopted at Baltimore, except that it spoke in favor of one Presidential term, declared that to Congress instead of the President belonged the question of reconstruction, and advocated the confiscation of the property of the rebels and its distribution among the soldiers.

The platform was adopted after brief debate, and a letter from Wendell Phillips was read to the Convention, full of the vehement unreason which distinguished most of the attempts of this matchless orator to apply his mind to the practical affairs of life. He predicted the direst results from four more years of Lincoln's Administration. "Unless the South is recognized"—which he apparently thought not improbable under Lincoln's nerveless policy—"the war will continue; the taxation needed to sustain our immense debt, doubled by that time, will grind the laboring man of the North down to the level of the pauper labor of Europe; and we shall have a Government accustomed to despotic power for eight years—a fearful peril to democratic institutions." He denounced Mr. Lincoln's plan of reconstruction, and drew this comical parallel between him and Frémont: "The Administration, therefore, I regard as a civil and military failure, and its avowed policy ruinous to the North in every

CHAP. II. point of view. Mr. Lincoln may wish the end — peace and freedom—but he is wholly unwilling to use the means which can secure that end. If Mr.
1864. Lincoln is reëlected I do not expect to see the Union reconstructed in my day, unless on terms more disastrous to liberty than even disunion would be. If I turn to General Frémont, I see a man whose first act was to use the freedom of the negro as his weapon; I see one whose thorough loyalty to democratic institutions, without regard to race, whose earnest and decisive character, whose clear-sighted statesmanship and rare military ability, justify my confidence that in his hands all will be done to save the State that foresight, skill, decision, and statesmanship can do.” With characteristic reliance on his own freedom from prejudice, he continued: “This is an hour of such peril to the Republic that I think men should surrender all party and personal partiality, and support any man able and willing to save the state.” This was, in fact, the attitude of mind of the vast majority of the people of the country; but all it meant in Mr. Phillips’s case was that he was willing to vote for either Frémont or Butler to defeat Lincoln.

A feeble attempt was now made by the delegates from New York, who called themselves “War Democrats,” to induce the Convention to nominate General Grant. Andrew J. Colvin read a letter from Lucius Robinson of New York—afterwards governor of that State—attacking the errors and blunders of “a weak Executive and Cabinet,” and claiming that the hope of the people throughout the country rested upon General Grant as a candidate. Although Mr. Colvin supplemented

the reading of this letter by promising a majority of one hundred thousand for Grant in the State of New York, the Missourians cheered only the louder for Frémont; and when a last effort was made by George W. Demers of Albany to nominate Grant, he was promptly denounced as a Lincoln hireling. Colonel Moss, in the uniform of a general of the Missouri militia, arose and put a stop to the profitless discussion by moving in a stentorian voice the nomination of General Frémont by acclamation, which was at once done; and the assembly completed its work by placing John Cochrane on the ticket as its candidate for Vice-President. No one present seemed to have any recollection of the provision of the Constitution which forbids electors voting for citizens of their own State for both these places.

The Convention met again in the evening and listened to dispirited and discouraging speeches of ratification. The committee appointed in the afternoon to give a name to the new party, brought in that of the "Radical Democracy," and in this style it was formally christened. An executive committee was appointed, of men destitute of executive capacity, and the Convention adjourned.

Its work met with no response from the country. On the day of its meeting the German press of Cleveland expressed its profound disappointment at the smallness and insignificance of the gathering, and with a few unimportant exceptions the newspapers of the country greeted the work of the Convention with an unbroken chorus of ridicule. Its absurdities and inconsistencies were, indeed, too glaring for serious consideration. Its movers had

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1864.

denounced the Baltimore Convention as being held too early for an expression of the deliberate judgment of the people, and now they had made their own nominations a week earlier; they had claimed that Baltimore was not sufficiently central in situation, and they had held their Convention on the northern frontier of the country; they had claimed that the Baltimore delegates were not properly elected, and they had assumed to make nominations by delegates not elected at all; they had denounced the Baltimore Convention as a close corporation and invited the people to assemble in mass, and when they came together they were so few they never dared to count themselves; they had pretended to desire a stronger candidate than Mr. Lincoln, and had selected the most conspicuous failure of the war; they clamored loudly against corruption in office, and one of the leading personages in the Convention was a member of Frémont's staff who had been dismissed the service for dishonesty in Government contracts.

The whole proceeding, though it excited some indignation among the friends of Mr. Lincoln, was regarded by the President himself only with amusement. On the morning after the Convention, a friend, giving him an account of it, said that, instead of the many thousands who had been expected, there were present at no time more than four hundred men. The President, struck by the number mentioned, reached for the Bible which commonly lay on his desk, and after a moment's search read these words: "And every one that was in distress, and every one that was in debt, and every one that was discontented, gathered themselves unto him;

and he became a captain over them: and there were with him about four hundred men.”¹ CHAP. II.

It was only among the Democratic papers that the Cleveland Convention met with any support or applause. They gave it solemn and unmeasured eulogies for its independence, its patriotism, its sagacity, and even its numbers. The Copperhead papers in New York urged the Radicals not to give up their attitude of uncompromising hostility to Lincoln, and predicted a formidable schism in the Republican party as a consequence of their action. But the motive of this support was so evident that it deceived nobody; and it was compared by a sarcastic observer to the conduct of the Spanish urchins accompanying a condemned Jew to an *auto-da-fé*, and shouting, in the fear that he might recant and rob them of their holiday, “Stand fast, Moses.” The ticket of the two New Yorkers met with a gust of ridicule which would have destroyed more robust chances than theirs. “The New York Major-General John C. and the New York Brigadier-General John C.” formed a matched ticket fated to laughter.

But if no one else took them seriously, the two generals at least saw in the circumstances no occasion for smiling. General Frémont promptly accepted his nomination. He said: “This is not an ordinary election. It is a contest for the right even to have candidates, and not merely, as usual, for the choice among them. . . The ordinary rights secured under the Constitution and the laws of the country have been violated, and extraordinary June 4, 1864.

¹ This, it will be remembered, was several years in advance of the famous reference to the Cave of Adullam in the British Parliament.

CHAP. II. powers have been usurped by the Executive. It is directly before the people now to say whether or not the principles established by the Revolution are worth maintaining. . . To-day we have in the country the abuses of a military dictation without its unity of action and vigor of execution — an Administration marked at home by disregard of constitutional rights, by its violation of personal liberty and the liberty of the press, and, as a crowning shame, by its abandonment of the right of asylum." The feebleness and want of principle of the Administration, its incapacity and selfishness, were roundly denounced by General Frémont, but he repudiated the cry of the Cleveland Convention for confiscating the property of rebels. In conclusion he said: "If the Convention at Baltimore will nominate any man whose past life justifies a well-grounded confidence in his fidelity to our cardinal principles, there is no reason why there should be any division among the really patriotic men of the country. To any such I shall be most happy to give a cordial and active support. . . But if Mr. Lincoln should be nominated — as I believe it would be fatal to the country to indorse a policy and renew a power which has cost us the lives of thousands of men, and needlessly put the country on the road to bankruptcy — there will remain no other alternative but to organize against him every element of conscientious opposition with the view to prevent the misfortune of his reëlection."

Mc-Pherson,
"History
of the
Rebellion,"
p. 414.

He therefore accepted the nomination, and informed the committee that he had resigned his commission in the army. General Cochrane accepted in briefer and more judicious language,

holding the same views as his chief on the subject of confiscation.

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Later in the summer some of the partisans of Frémont, seeing that there was positively no response in the country to his candidacy, wrote to him suggesting that the candidates nominated at Cleveland and Baltimore should both withdraw, and leave the field entirely free for a united effort for "a new convention which should represent the patriotism of all parties." They asked him whether in case Mr. Lincoln would withdraw he would do so. Although the contingency referred to was more than sufficiently remote, General Frémont with unbroken dignity refused to accede to this proposition. "Having now definitely accepted the Cleveland nomination," he said, "I have not the right to act independently of the truly patriotic and earnest party who conferred that honor upon me. . . It might, besides, have only the effect still further to unsettle the public mind, and defeat the object you have in view, if we should disorganize before first proceeding to organize something better."

Aug. 20,
1864.

Aug. 25,
1864.

But a month later he seemed to have regarded the public mind as beyond the risk of unsettling, and he then wrote to his committee, withdrawing his name from the list of candidates. He could not, however, withhold a parting demonstration against the President. "In respect to Mr. Lincoln," he said, "I continue to hold exactly the sentiments contained in my letter of acceptance. I consider that his Administration has been politically, militarily, and financially a failure, and that its necessary continuance is a cause of regret for

Sept. 17.

Sept. 21.

CHAP. II.

the country. There never was a greater unanimity in a country than was exhibited here at the fall of Sumter, and the South was powerless in the face of it; but Mr. Lincoln completely paralyzed this generous feeling. He destroyed the strength of the position and divided the North when he declared to the South that slavery should be protected. He has built up for the South a strength which otherwise they could have never attained, and this has given them an advocate on the Chicago platform."

Mc-
Pherson,
"History
of the
Rebellion,"
pp. 426, 427.

Sept. 21.

With a final denunciation of the leading men whose reticence had "established for him [Mr. Lincoln] a character among the people which leaves now no choice," General Frémont at last subsided into silence. General Cochrane on the same day withdrew his name from the Cleveland ticket, which had already passed into swift oblivion. His letter had none of the asperity which characterized that of his chief. He genially attacked the Chicago resolutions, and, while regretting the omissions of the Baltimore platform, he approved it in substance. "We stand within view," he said, "of a rebellion suppressed, within hail of a country reunited and saved. War lifts the curtain and discloses the prospect. War has given to us Atlanta, and war offers to us Richmond. . . . Peace and division, or war and the Union. Other alternative there is none."

Mc-
Pherson,
"History
of the
Rebellion,"
p. 427.

Two incidents which occurred in the spring of 1864 caused unusual excitement among both wings of the opposition to Mr. Lincoln. The one was the delivery of Arguelles to the Spanish authorities; the other was the seizure of two New York news-

papers for publishing a forged proclamation. It was altogether natural that the pro-slavery Democrats and peace men should have objected to these acts, as one of the injured parties was a slave-trader, and the others opponents of the war; but it was not the least of the absurdities of the Cleveland protestants that they also, in their anxiety to find a weapon against the President, at the very moment that they were assailing him for not overriding all law and precedent in obedience to their demand, still belabored him for these instances of energetic action in the very direction in which they demanded that he should proceed.

The case of Arguelles was a perfectly clear one; and if the surrender of a criminal is ever justified as an exercise of international comity in the absence of treaty stipulations, no objections could reasonably be made in this instance. He was a colonel in the Spanish army and lieutenant-governor of the district of Colon, in Cuba. He had captured a cargo of African slaves in his official capacity, and had received much credit for his efficiency and a considerable sum of money as his share of the prize. He went to New York immediately afterwards and purchased a Spanish newspaper which was published there; but after his departure from Cuba it was ascertained that in beginning so extensive a business in New York he did not rely exclusively upon the money he had received from the Government, but that in concert with a curate of Colon he had sold one hundred and forty-one of the recaptured Africans, had put the money in his own pocket, and had officially reported them as having died of small-pox.

CHAP. II.

The Cuban Government laid these facts before the State Department at Washington, and represented that the return of this miscreant to Cuba was necessary to secure the liberation of the unfortunate victims of his cruelty and greed. It was impossible to bring the matter before the courts, as no extradition treaty existed at that period between Spain and the United States, and the American authorities could not by any legal procedure take cognizance of the crime. The President and Mr. Seward at once assumed the responsibility of acting in the only way indicated by the laws of common humanity and international courtesy. Arguelles was arrested in New York by the United States marshal, put in charge of a Spanish officer commissioned for the purpose, and by him taken to Havana. The action of the Government was furiously attacked by all the pro-slavery organs.

"Globe,"
May 26,
1864,
p. 2484.

A resolution was introduced by Reverdy Johnson in the Senate demanding an explanation of the circumstances. Mr. Seward answered, basing the action of the Government upon the stipulations of the ninth article of the treaty of 1842 with Great Britain, by which the two countries agreed to use all the measures in their power to close the market for slaves throughout the world, and added: "Although there is a conflict of authorities concerning the expediency of exercising comity towards a foreign government by surrendering, at its request, one of its own subjects charged with the commission of crime within its territory, and although it may be conceded that there is no national obligation to make such a surrender upon a demand therefor, unless it is acknowledged by

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treaty or by statute law, yet a nation is never bound to furnish asylum to dangerous criminals who are offenders against the human race; and it is believed that if in any case the comity could with propriety be practiced, the one which is understood to have called forth the resolution furnished a just occasion for its exercise."

Seward
to Lincoln,
May 30, 1864.
Mc-
Pherson,
"History
of the
Rebellion,"
p. 355.

The Captain-General of Cuba, on the arrival of Arguelles, sent his thanks to Mr. Seward "for the service which he has rendered to humanity by furnishing the medium through which a great number of human beings will obtain their freedom whom the desertion of the person referred to would have reduced to slavery. His presence alone in this island a very few hours has given liberty to eighty-six."

"May 19, 1864.
Ibid.

The grand jury of New York nevertheless indicted Marshal Robert Murray for the arrest of Arguelles on the charge of kidnaping. The marshal pleaded the orders of the President as the authority for his action, and based upon this a petition that the case be transferred to the United States court; and although the judges before whom he was taken, who happened to be Democrats, denied this petition, the indictment was finally quashed, and the only result of the President's action was the denunciation which he received in the Democratic newspapers, combined with the shrill treble of the clamor from the Cleveland Convention.

The momentary suppression of the two New York newspapers, of which mention has been made, was a less defensible act, and arose from an error which was, after all, sufficiently natural on the part of the Secretary of War. On the 19th of May the

CHAP. II.

“Journal of Commerce” and the “World,” two newspapers which had especially distinguished themselves by the violence of their opposition to the Administration, published a forged proclamation, signed by the President’s name, calling, in terms of exaggerated depression not far from desperation, for four hundred thousand troops. It was a scheme devised by two young Bohemians of the press, probably with no other purpose than that of making money by stock-jobbing. In the tremulous state of the public mind which then prevailed, in the midst of the terrible slaughter of Grant’s opening campaign, the country was painfully sensitive to such news, and the forged proclamation, telegraphed far and wide, accomplished for the moment the purpose for which it was doubtless intended. It excited everywhere a feeling of consternation; the price of gold rose rapidly during the morning hours, and the Stock Exchange was thrown into violent fever. The details of the mystification were managed with some skill, the paper on which the document was written being that employed by the Associated Press in delivering its news to the journals, and it was left at all the newspaper offices in New York just before the moment of going to press. If all the newspapers had printed it the guiltlessness of each would have been equally evident; but unfortunately for the victims of the trick, the only two papers which published the forgery were those whose previous conduct had rendered them liable to the suspicion of bad faith. The fiery Secretary of War immediately issued orders for the suppression of the “World” and “Journal of Commerce,” and the arrest of their editors. The

May 19, 1864.



GENERAL CARL SCHURZ.

CHAP. II.

editors were never incarcerated ; after a short detention, they were released. The publication of the papers was resumed after two days of interruption.

These prompt measures and the announcement of the imposture sent over the country by telegraph soon quieted the excitement, and the quick detection of the guilty persons reduced the incident to its true rank in the annals of vulgar misdemeanors. But in the memories of the Democrats of New York the incident survived, and was vigorously employed during the summer months as a means of attack upon the Administration. Governor Seymour interested himself in the matter and wrote a long and vehement letter to the district attorney of New York denouncing the action of the Government.

May 23, 1864.

"These things," he said in his exclamatory style, "are more hurtful to the national honor and strength than the loss of battles. The world will confound such acts with the principles of our Government, and the folly and crimes of officials will be looked upon as the natural results of the spirit of our institutions. Our State and local authorities must repel this ruinous inference." He predicted the most dreadful consequences to the city of New York if this were not done. The harbor would be sealed up, the commerce of New York paralyzed, the world would withdraw from the keeping of New York merchants its treasures and its commerce if they did not unite in this demand for the security of persons and of property. In obedience to these frantic orders A. Oakey Hall, the district attorney, did his best, and was energetically seconded by Judge Russell, who charged the grand jury that the officers who took possession of these newspaper

Mc-
Pherson,
"History
of the
Rebellion,"
p. 192.

CHAP. II. establishments were "liable as for riot"; but the grand jury, who seem to have kept their heads more successfully than either the Governor or the judge, resolved that it was "inexpedient to examine into the subject." The Governor could not rest quiet under this contemptuous refusal of the grand jury to do his bidding. He wrote again to the district attorney, saying, "As they [the grand jury] have refused to do their duty, the subject of the seizure of these journals should at once be brought before some proper magistrate." He promised him all the assistance he required in the prosecution of the investigations. Thus egged on by the chief executive of the State, Mr. Hall proceeded to do the work required of him. Upon warrants issued at his instance by City Judge Russell, General Dix and several officers of his staff were arrested. They submitted with perfect courtesy to the behest of the civil authorities, and appeared before Judge Russell to answer for their acts. The judge held them over on their own recognizance to await the action of another grand jury, which, it was hoped, might be more subservient to the wishes of the Governor than the last; but no further action was ever taken.

June 25,
1864.

July 1, 1864.

During the same week which witnessed the radical fiasco at Cleveland, an attempt was made in New York to put General Grant before the country as a Presidential candidate. The committee having the matter in charge made no public avowal of their intentions; they merely called a meeting to express the gratitude of the country to the general for his signal services. They even invited the President to take part in the proceedings, an in-

vitiation which he said it was impossible for him to accept. CHAP. II.

"I approve," he wrote, "nevertheless, whatever may tend to strengthen and sustain General Grant and the noble armies now under his direction. My previous high estimate of General Grant has been maintained and heightened by what has occurred in the remarkable campaign he is now conducting, while the magnitude and difficulty of the task before him do not prove less than I expected. He and his brave soldiers are now in the midst of their great trial, and I trust that at your meeting you will so shape your good words that they may turn to men and guns, moving to his and their support."

Lincoln to
F. A.
Conkling
and others,
June 8, 1864.
MS.

With such a gracious approval of the movement, the meeting naturally fell into the hands of the Lincoln men. General Grant neither at this time nor at any other gave the least countenance to the efforts which were made to array him in political opposition to the President.

CHAPTER III

LINCOLN RENOMINATED

CHAP. III.

IN other chapters we have mentioned the unavailing efforts made by a few politicians to defeat the will of the people which everywhere demanded the renomination of Mr. Lincoln. These efforts were worth studying as manifestations of eccentric human nature, but they never had the least effect upon the great currents of public opinion. Death alone could have prevented the choice of Mr. Lincoln by the Union Convention. So absolute and universal was this tendency that most of the politicians made no effort to direct or guide it; they simply exerted themselves to keep in the van and not be overwhelmed. The Convention was to meet on the 7th of June, but the irregular nominations of the President began at the feast of the Epiphany. The first convention of the year was held in New Hampshire on the 6th of January —for the nomination of State officers. It had properly no concern with the National nominations. The Convention consisted in great part of the friends of Mr. Chase, and those employees of the Treasury Department whose homes were in New Hampshire had come together determined to smother any mistimed demonstration for the Presi-

1864.

dent; but the first mention of his name set the assembly on fire, and before the chairman knew what he was doing the Convention had declared in favor of the renomination of Lincoln.

CHAP. III.

The same day a far more important demonstration came to the surface in Pennsylvania. The State Legislature met on the 5th of January, and the following day a paper, prepared in advance, addressed to the President, requesting him to accept a second term of the Presidency, began to be circulated among the Union members. Not one to whom it was presented declined to sign it. Within a day or two it received the signature of every Union member of the Senate and the Assembly of Pennsylvania, and Simon Cameron, transmitting it to the President on the 14th of January, could say:

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"You are now fairly launched on your second voyage, and of its success I am as confident as ever I was of anything in my life. Providence has decreed your reelection, and no combination of the wicked can prevent it."

Cameron to
Lincoln,
Jan. 14,
1864. MS.

This remarkable address began by congratulating the President upon the successes of the recent election, which were generously ascribed to the policy of his Administration. Referring to the Republican victory in their own State, the members of the Legislature said: "If the voice of Pennsylvania became thus potential in indorsing the policy of your Administration, we consider that, as the representatives of those who have so completely indorsed your official course, we are only responding to their demands when we thus publicly announce our unshaken preference for your

CHAP. III. reëlection to the Presidency in 1864." This preference was justified by them purely on public grounds.

"To make a change in the Administration until its authority has been fully reëstablished in the revolted States would be to give the enemies of the Government abroad a pretext for asserting that the Government had failed at home. To change the policy in operation to crush rebellion and restore the land to peace would be to afford the traitors in arms time to gather new strength — if not for immediate victory, at least for ultimate success in their efforts permanently to dissolve the Union. . . We do not make this communication at this time to elicit from you any expression of opinion on this subject. Having confidence in your patriotism, we believe that you will abide the decision of the friends of the Union, and yield consent to any honorable use which they may deem proper to make of your name in order to secure the greatest good to the country and the speediest success to our arms. . . Expressing what we feel to be the language not only of our own constituents, but also of the people of all the loyal States, we claim to indulge the expectation that you will yield to the preference which has already made you the people's candidate for the Presidency in 1864."

1864.

In every gathering of the supporters of the Union the same irrepressible sentiment broke forth. The "New-York Times" on the 15th of January clearly expressed the general feeling: "The same wise policy which would forbid a man of business in troublous times to change his agent of proved efficiency, impels the loyal people of our

country to continue President Lincoln in his responsible position; and against the confirmed will of the people politicians are powerless.” CHAP. III.

The sentiment was so potent in its pressure upon the politicians that they everywhere gave way and broke into premature indorsement of the nomination. The Union Central Committee of New York held a special meeting, and unanimously recommended the renomination of the President. Senator Morgan, sending this news to Mr. Lincoln, added: “It is going to be difficult to restrain the boys, and there is not much use in trying to do so.” Jan. 4, 1864.
MS.

At a local election some of the ward tickets were headed, with an irrelevancy which showed the spirit of the hour, “For President of the United States in 1864, Abraham Lincoln.”

From one end to the other of the country these spontaneous nominations joyously echoed one another. Towards the close of January the Radical Legislature of Kansas, with but one dissenting voice, passed through both its houses a resolution renominating Lincoln. All through the next month these demonstrations continued. The Union members of the New Jersey Legislature united in an address to the President, saying: “Without any disparagement of the true men who surround you, and whose counsel you have shared, believing that you are the choice of the people, whose servants we are, and firmly satisfied that they desire and intend to give you four years for a policy of peace, we present your name as the man for President of the American people, in 1864.” Feb. 18,
1864. MS.

Connecticut instructed her delegates by resolutions on the 17th of February; Maryland, Min-

CHAP. III. nesota, and Colorado expressed in the same way the sentiment of their people. Wisconsin and Indiana made haste to range themselves with the other Northern States; and Ohio seized the opportunity to put a stop to the restless ambition of her favorite son by a resolution of the Republican members of the Legislature declaring that "the people of Ohio, and her soldiers in the field, demand the renomination of Abraham Lincoln to the Presidency"—the members rising to their feet and cheering with uncontrollable clamor when the resolution passed. The State of Maine, on the extreme eastern border, spoke next. Early in March the President received this dispatch, signed by a name afterwards illustrious in our political annals: "Both branches of the Maine Legislature have this day adopted resolutions cordially recommending your renomination. Every Union member voted in favor of them. Maine is a unit for you.—James G. Blaine."

Mar. 3, 1864.
MS.

Nowhere except in the State of Missouri was the name of Mr. Lincoln mentioned without overwhelming adhesion, and even in the Missouri Assembly the resolution in favor of his renomination was laid upon the table by a majority of only eight. There had been some anxiety on the part of Mr. Lincoln's friends lest the powerful secret organization called the Union League, which represented the most ardent and vehement Republican sentiment of the country, should fall into the hands of his opponents; but it was speedily seen that out of Missouri these apprehensions were groundless. The Union Leagues of New York, Illinois, and even Vicksburg, where the victory of

Grant had allowed the development of a robust Union sentiment, were among the first to declare for the President. The Union League Club in Philadelphia, powerful in wealth, intelligence, and personal influence, so early as the 11th of January had resolved that to the "prudence, sagacity, comprehension, and perseverance of Mr. Lincoln, under the guidance of a benign Providence, the nation is more indebted for the grand results of the war, which Southern rebels have wickedly waged against liberty and the Union, than to any other single instrumentality; and that he is justly entitled to whatever reward it is in the power of the nation to bestow." They declared also: "That as Mr. Lincoln has had to endure the largest share of the labor required to suppress the Rebellion, now rapidly verging to its close, he should also enjoy the largest share of the honors which await those who have contended for the right. They therefore recognize with pleasure the unmistakable indications of the popular will in all the loyal States, and heartily join with their fellow-citizens, without any distinction of party, here and elsewhere, in presenting him as the people's candidate for the Presidency."

The current swept on irresistibly throughout the months of spring. A few opponents of Mr. Lincoln, seeing that he would be nominated the moment the Convention should meet, made one last effort to postpone the meeting of the Convention until September, knowing that their only reliance was in some possible accident of the summer. So earnest and important a Republican as William Cullen Bryant united with a self-constituted committee of others equally earnest, but not so important, to

CHAP. III. induce the National Committee to postpone the Convention. In their opinion the country was not now in a position to enter into a Presidential contest; it was clear to them that no nomination could be made with any unanimity so early as June. They thought it best to see what the result of the summer campaign would be, as the wish of the people to continue their present leaders in power would depend very much upon this. The committee, of course, took no notice of this appeal, though it was favored by so strong a Republican authority as the "New York Tribune." The National Committee wisely thought that they might with as much reason take into consideration the request of a committee of prominent citizens to check an impending thunder-storm. All the movements in opposition to Mr. Lincoln were marked with the same naïveté and futility. The secret circular of Senator Pomeroy, the farcical Cleveland Convention, the attempt of Mr. Bryant's committee to postpone the Baltimore Convention, were all equally feeble and nugatory in their effect.

April 26,
1864.

Mr. Lincoln took no measures whatever to promote his candidacy. It is true he did not, like other candidates, assume airs of reluctance or bashfulness. While he discouraged on the part of strangers any suggestions as to his reëlection, among his friends he made no secret of his readiness to continue the work he was engaged in, if such should seem to be the general wish. In a private letter to Elihu B. Washburne, he said: "A second term would be a great honor and a great labor, which together perhaps I would not decline if tendered." To another Congressman he is reported to

Oct. 26,
1863. MS.

have said: "I do not desire a renomination, except for the reason that such action on the part of the Republican party would be the most emphatic indorsement which could be given to the policy of my Administration." We have already mentioned the equanimity with which he treated the efforts of a leading member of his Cabinet to supplant him, and he received in the same manner the frequent suggestions of apprehensive friends that he would do well to beware of Grant. His usual reply was: "If he takes Richmond, let him have it." In reality, General Grant was never at any time a competitor for the nomination. Of course, after the battle of Missionary Ridge there was no lack of such suggestions on the part of those who surrounded the victorious general; but he positively refused to put himself in the lists or to give any sanction to the use of his name.

The President constantly discouraged on the part of office-holders of the Government, civil or military, any especial eagerness in his behalf. General Schurz wrote, late in February, asking permission to take an active part in the Presidential canvass, to which Mr. Lincoln replied: "Allow me to suggest that if you wish to remain in the military service, it is very dangerous for you to get temporarily out of it; because, with a major-general once out, it is next to impossible for even the President to get him in again. With my appreciation of your ability and correct principle, of course I would be very glad to have your service for the country in the approaching political canvass; but I fear we cannot properly have it without separating you from the military." And in a subsequent letter

Lincoln to
Schurz,
Mar. 13,
1864. MS.

CHAP. III.

Lincoln to
Schurz,
Mar. 28,
1864.
Autograph
MS.

addressed to the same general, he said: "I perceive no objection to your making a political speech when you are where one is to be made; but quite surely speaking in the North and fighting in the South at the same time are not possible; nor could I be justified to detail any officer to the political campaign during its continuance and then return him to the army."

The experience of a hundred years of our politics has shown what perils environ a Presidential candidate who makes speeches. The temptation to flatter the immediate audience, without regard to the ultimate effect of the words spoken, has often proved too strong for the wariest politician to resist. Especially is a candidate in danger when confronting an audience belonging to a special race or class. Mr. Lincoln made no mistake either in 1860 or in 1864. Even when exposed to the strongest possible temptation, the reception of an address from a deputation of a workingmen's association, he preserved his mental balance undisturbed. To such a committee, who approached him on the 21st of March, 1864, he replied by repeating to them the passage from his message of December, 1861, in which the relations of labor and capital are set down with mathematical and logical precision, illuminated by the light of a broad humanity; and he only added to the views thus expressed the following words, than which nothing wiser or more humane has ever been said by social economists:

None are so deeply interested to resist the present Rebellion as the working people. Let them beware of prejudices working disunion and hostility among them-

selves. The most notable feature of a disturbance in your city last summer was the hanging of some working people by other working people. It should never be so. The strongest bond of human sympathy, outside of the family relation, should be one uniting all working people, of all nations and tongues and kindreds. Nor should this lead to a war upon property or the owners of property. Property is the fruit of labor, property is desirable, is a positive good in the world. That some should be rich shows that others may become rich, and hence, is just encouragement to industry and enterprise. Let not him who is houseless pull down the house of another, but let him labor diligently and build one for himself, thus by example assuring that his own shall be safe from violence when built.

CHAP. III.
Mar. 21, 1864.

Mc-
Pherson,
"History
of the
Rebellion,"
p. 607.

The politicians who opposed Mr. Lincoln, whether from pure motives or from motives not so pure, met with one common fate: they were almost universally beaten in their own districts by men who, whatever their other incentives, were sufficiently adroit to perceive the sign in which they should conquer. It gave a man all this year a quite unfair advantage in his district to be known as a friend of the President, when his opponent was not equally outspoken; and many of the most radical politicians, seeing in which direction their advantage lay, suddenly turned upon their opponents and vanquished them in the President's name. General Lane, for example, who had been engaged in a bitter controversy with Pomeroy in regard to local interests in Kansas, saw his opportunity in the anti-Lincoln circular of his colleague; and although before this it would have been hard to say which of the two had been most free in his criticisms of the President, General Lane instantly trimmed his sails to catch the favoring breeze and elected himself

CHAP. III. and a full list of delegates to the Baltimore Convention, whom he called, in his characteristic language, "all vindictive friends of the President." Other Members of Congress, equally radical and more sincere and honest, made haste to range themselves on the side of the President against those with whom they had been more intimately associated. William D. Kelley of Philadelphia publicly proclaimed him "the wisest Radical of us all"; James M. Ashley, of Ohio, to whom one of his abolitionist constituents had objected that he wanted no more of a President who had not crushed a rebellion in four years, replied that this was unreasonable, as the Lord had not crushed the devil in a much longer time.

As the day for the meeting at Baltimore drew near, and its unanimous verdict became more and more evident, the President was besieged from every quarter of the Union with solicitations to make known his wishes in regard to the work of the Convention. To all such inquiries he returned an energetic refusal to give any word of counsel or to express any personal desire. During a few days preceding the Convention a great many delegates took the road to Washington, either to get some intimation of the President's wishes or to impress their own faces and names on his expectant mind. They were all welcomed with genial and cordial courtesy, but received not the slightest intimation of what would be agreeable to him. The most powerful politicians from New York and Pennsylvania were listened to with no more confidential consideration than the shy and awkward representatives of the rebellious States, who had elected

themselves in sutlers' tents and in the shadow of department headquarters. "What is that crowd of people in the hall?" he asked one day of his secretary. "It is a delegation from South Carolina. They are a swindle." "Let them in," said Lincoln; "they will not swindle me."

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J. H.,
Diary.

When at last the Convention came together on the 7th of June, 1864, it had less to do than any other convention in our political history. The delegates were bound by a peremptory mandate. John W. Forney, the editor of the "Philadelphia Press," in an article printed the day before the meeting, put forth with unusual candor the attitude of the Convention towards its constituents. The permanent policy of the Republican party of the nation was already absolutely established by the acts of the President and accepted and ratified by Congress and the people. "For this reason," said Mr. Forney, "it is less important as a political body, as it cannot originate but will simply republish a policy. Yet for this reason it is transcendently the more imposing in its expression of the national will. Nor has the Convention a candidate to choose. Choice is forbidden it by the previous action of the people. It is a body which almost beyond parallel is directly responsible to the people, and little more than the instrument of their will. Mr. Lincoln is already renominated, and the Convention will but formally announce the decision of the people. If this absence of independence lessens the mere political interest of the Convention in one respect, the fact that it will thoroughly and unquestionably obey national instructions gives it higher importance."

"Philadelphia
Press,"
June 6,
1864.

CHAP. III. These words represented the well-nigh universal sentiment among Republicans. There were, of course, those to whom such a sentiment was not agreeable. Horace Greeley found it hard to accept an opinion which ran counter to his personal views.

June 6, 1862. In an article of the same date as that last quoted, although he admitted the predestined action of the Convention, he still protested vehemently against the impolicy of such action. He quoted the message sent by Mr. Lincoln to Governor Seymour in the dark winter of 1862-63, "that if he wants to be President of the United States, he must take care that there shall be a United States."

"We could wish," he said, "the Presidency utterly forgotten or ignored for the next two months, while every impulse, every effort of the loyal millions should be directed toward the overthrow of the armed hosts of the Rebellion. That effected, or its speedy accomplishment proved impossible, we should be ready to enter clear-sightedly on the Presidential canvass. Now we are not. We feel that the expected nomination, if made at this time, exposes the Union party to a dangerous 'flank movement'—possibly a successful one."

"New York
Tribune,"
June 6, 1864.

Among the Democratic newspapers a still more blind and obstinate disinclination to accept the existing facts was seen up to the hour of the meeting of the Convention. They still insisted that the nomination of Mr. Lincoln was in the highest degree doubtful; some pretended that the delegates were equally divided between Lincoln and Grant; others insisted that the nomination of Frémont at Cleveland had electrified the country and would probably carry the Convention by storm.



GENERAL LOVELL H. ROUSSEAU.

The Convention was opened by a brief speech from Senator Morgan of New York, who was chairman of the executive committee. It contained one significant sentence. He said the party of which they were the delegates and honored representatives would fall short of accomplishing its great mission unless among its other resolves it should declare for such amendment of the Constitution as would positively prohibit African slavery in the United States. The sentence was greeted with prolonged applause, which burst at last into three cheers, in the midst of which Governor Morgan announced the choice by the National Committee of the Rev. Dr. Robert J. Breckinridge of Kentucky as temporary chairman. The venerable Kentuckian on taking the chair made a speech which, though entirely extemporaneous, was delivered with great ease and dignity, and profoundly impressed his auditors.

Disregarding the etiquette which assumes that a convention is a deliberative assembly and that its choice cannot be foretold until it is made, he calmly took it for granted at the very beginning of his remarks that the Union candidate for the Presidency was already nominated, and as soon as the tumultuous cheers which greeted his mention of the name of Abraham Lincoln had died away he turned at once to the discussion of what he considered the real business of the day—the declaration of principles. Coming from a section of the country where the Constitution had been especially revered in words and vehemently assailed in action, he declared that with all the outcry about our violations of the Constitution this

CHAP. III. present living generation and this present Union party are more thoroughly devoted to that Constitution than any generation that ever lived under it; but he contended also that sacred as was the Constitution the nation was not its slave. "We ought to have it distinctly understood by friends and enemies that while we love that instrument, [while] we will maintain it, and will, with undoubted certainty, put to death friend or foe who undertakes to trample it under foot; yet, beyond a doubt, we will reserve the right to alter it to suit ourselves from time to time and from generation to generation." This speech was full of brief and powerful apothegms, some of which were startling as coming from an aged theologian of an aspect equally strong and benignant. "The only enduring, the only imperishable cement of all free institutions," he said, "has been the blood of traitors. . . It is a fearful truth, but we had as well avow it at once; and every blow you strike, and every rebel you kill, every battle you win, dreadful as it is to do it, you are adding, it may be a year, it may be ten years, it may be a century, it may be ten centuries, to the life of the Government and the freedom of your children." Though presiding over a political convention, he declared himself absolutely detached from politics. "As a Union party I will follow you to the ends of the earth, and to the gates of death. But as an Abolition party, as a Republican party, as a Whig party, as a Democratic party, as an American party I will not follow you one foot." He echoed the brief speech in which E. D. Morgan had struck the keynote. He said: "I unite myself with those who believe it [slavery] is

Mc-
Pherson,
"History
of the
Rebellion,"
pp. 403, 404.

contrary to the brightest interests of all men and of all governments, contrary to the spirit of the Christian religion, and incompatible with the natural rights of man. I join myself with those who say, Away with it forever; and I fervently pray God that the day may come when throughout the whole land every man may be as free as you are, and as capable of enjoying regulated liberty. . . I know very well that the sentiments which I am uttering will cause me great odium in the State in which I was born, which I love, where the bones of two generations of my ancestors and some of my children are, and where very soon I shall lay my own. . . . But we have put our faces toward the way in which we intend to go, and we will go in it to the end."

CHAP. III.

Mc-
Pherson,
"History
of the
Rebellion,"
pp. 404, 405.

In the evening the permanent organization of the Convention was effected, William Dennison of Ohio being made chairman. He, also, in a brief and eloquent speech took for granted the unanimous nomination for the Presidency of the United States "of the wise and good man whose unselfish devotion to the country, in the administration of the Government, has secured to him not only the admiration but the warmest affection of every friend of constitutional liberty"; and also, in the tone of both the speakers who had preceded him, said that the loyal people of the country expected the Convention "to declare the cause and the support of the Rebellion to be slavery, which, as well for its treasonable offenses against the Government as for its incompatibility with the rights of humanity and the permanent peace of the country, must, with the termination of the war, and as much

June 7, 1864.

CHAP. III.

Mc-
Pherson,
"History
of the
Rebellion,"
p. 405.

speedier as possible, be made to cease forever in every State and Territory of the Union."

There were in fact but three tasks before the Convention. The first was to settle the status of contesting delegations from the States and Territories; the second, to agree upon the usual platform; and the third, to nominate a candidate for the Vice-Presidency. All of these questions were handled skillfully, and with a spirit of moderation which led to the most successful result in the canvass.

June 8, 1864.

There were no questions of consequence in regard to the delegations of any of the Northern States, nor did any questions arise in regard to those from Kentucky and West Virginia, Delaware and Maryland. There were two delegations from Missouri, both making special claims of loyalty and of regularity of election. The committee on credentials decided that those styling themselves the "Radical Union" delegates should be awarded the seats. As this was the only delegation which had presented itself opposed to the nomination of Lincoln, and as a large majority, not only of the Convention, but of the committee on credentials, were of the contrary opinion, their action in admitting the recalcitrant Missourians was sagacious. It quieted at once the beginnings of what might have been a dangerous schism. The question as to admitting the delegates from Tennessee also raised some discussion, but was decided in their favor by more than a two-thirds vote. The delegates from Louisiana and Arkansas were also admitted by a vote nearly as large. The delegates from Nevada, Colorado, and Nebraska were admitted with the right to vote; those from the States of Virginia

and Florida, and the remaining Territories, were admitted to the privileges of the floor without the right to vote; and those from South Carolina were rejected altogether.

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The same wise spirit of compromise was shown in the platform reported by Henry J. Raymond of New York. The first resolution declared it the highest duty of every citizen to maintain the integrity of the Union and to quell the Rebellion by force of arms; the second approved the determination of the Government to enter into no compromise with the rebels; the third, while approving all the acts hitherto done against slavery, declared in favor of an amendment to the Constitution, terminating and forever prohibiting the existence of slavery in the United States. This resolution was received with an outburst of spontaneous and thunderous applause. The fourth resolution gave thanks to the soldiers and sailors; the fifth applauded the practical wisdom, unselfish patriotism, and unswerving fidelity with which Abraham Lincoln had discharged, under circumstances of unparalleled difficulty, the great duties and responsibilities of the Presidential office, and it enumerated and approved the acts of his Administration. The sixth resolution was of sufficient significance to be given entire.

June 8, 1864.

Resolved, That we deem it essential to the general welfare that harmony should prevail in our national councils, and we regard as worthy of public confidence and official trust those only who cordially indorse the principles proclaimed in these resolutions and which should characterize the administration of the Government.

This resolution, like the admission of the Missouri Radicals, was intended in general to win the

CHAP. III. support and heal the dissatisfaction of the so-called Radicals throughout the Union. Its specific meaning, however, was not entirely clear. There were not many of the delegates who voted for it who would have agreed upon all the details of a scheme for reorganizing the Cabinet. If measures for ostracizing all the objectionable members of the Government had been set on foot in the hall of the Convention, it is probable that the name of every member of the Cabinet would have been found on some of the shells. It is altogether likely, however, that the name of the Postmaster-General would have occurred more frequently than that of any other minister. The controversy between his brother and the Radicals of Missouri, in which he had, in accordance with his habit and temperament, taken an energetic part, had embittered against him the feelings of the radical Republicans, not only in the West, but throughout the North, and his habit of candid and trenchant criticism had raised for him enemies in all political circles.

The seventh resolution claimed for the colored troops the full protection of the laws of war. The eighth declared that foreign immigration should be fostered and encouraged. The ninth spoke in favor of the speedy construction of a railroad to the Pacific coast. The tenth declared that the national faith pledged for the redemption of the public debt must be kept inviolate; and the eleventh declared against the efforts of any European power to establish monarchical governments sustained by foreign military forces in near proximity to the United States.

This last resolution showed the result of an adroit and sagacious compromise. The Radicals in

the Convention desired to make it a censure upon the action of the President and the Secretary of State; but the friends of the Administration, while accepting to its utmost results the declaration in favor of the Monroe Doctrine, assumed that the President and his Cabinet were of the same mind, and therefore headed the resolution with the declaration, "That we approve the decision taken by the Government that the people of the United States can never regard with indifference the attempt of any European power to overthrow by force or to supplant by fraud the institutions of any Republican Government on the Western continent."

CHAP. III.
June 8, 1864.

Raymond,
"Life of
Abraham
Lincoln,"
pp. 556-558.

There was nothing more before the Convention but the nominations, and one of those was in fact already made. The only delay in registering the will of the Convention occurred as a consequence of the attempt of members to do it by irregular and summary methods. Mr. Delano of Ohio made the customary motion to proceed to the nomination; Simon Cameron moved as a substitute the renomination of Lincoln and Hamlin by acclamation. A long wrangle ensued on the motion to lay this substitute on the table, which was brought to a close by a brief speech from Henry J. Raymond, representing the cooler heads, who were determined that whatever opposition there might be should have the fullest opportunity of expression; and by a motion, which was adopted, to nominate in the usual way, by the call of States. The interminable nominating speeches of recent years had not come into fashion: B. C. Cook, the chairman of the Illinois delegation, merely said, "The State of Illinois again presents to the loyal people of this nation, for

CHAP. III. President of the United States, Abraham Lincoln — God bless him !” and those who seconded the nomination were equally brief. Every State gave its undivided voice for Lincoln, with the exception of Missouri, which cast its vote, as the chairman stated, under positive instructions, for Grant. But before the result was announced John F. Hume of Missouri moved that the nomination of Lincoln be declared unanimous. This could not be done until the result of the balloting was made known — 484 for Lincoln, 22 for Grant. Missouri then changed its vote, and the secretary read the grand total of 506 for Lincoln. This announcement was greeted with a storm of cheering, which during many minutes as often as it died away burst out anew.

The principal names mentioned for the Vice-Presidency were, besides Hannibal Hamlin, the actual incumbent, Andrew Johnson of Tennessee, and Daniel S. Dickinson of New York; besides these General L. H. Rousseau had the vote of his own State, Kentucky. The Radicals of Missouri favored General B. F. Butler, who had a few scattered votes also from New England. But among the three principal candidates the voters were equally enough divided to make the contest exceedingly spirited and interesting. For several days before the Convention the President had been besieged by inquiries as to his personal wishes in regard to his associate on the ticket. He had persistently refused to give the slightest intimation of such wish. His private secretary, Mr. Nicolay, was at Baltimore in attendance at the Convention; and although he was acquainted with this attitude of the President, at last, overborne by the solicitations of the chairman

of the Illinois delegation, who had been perplexed at the advocacy of Joseph Holt by Leonard Swett, one of the President's most intimate friends, Mr. Nicolay wrote a letter to Mr. Hay, who had been left in charge of the executive office in his absence, containing among other matters this passage: "Cook wants to know confidentially whether Swett is all right; whether in urging Holt for Vice-President he reflects the President's wishes; whether the President has any preference, either personal or on the score of policy; or whether he wishes not even to interfere by a confidential intimation. . . Please get this information for me, if possible." The letter was shown to the President, who indorsed upon it this memorandum: "Swett is unquestionably all right. Mr. Holt is a good man, but I had not heard or thought of him for V. P. Wish not to interfere about V. P. Can not interfere about platform. Convention must judge for itself."

CHAP. III.

Nicolay to
Hay. MS.Lincoln,
In-
dorsement,
Autograph
MS.

This positive and final instruction was sent at once to Mr. Nicolay, and by him communicated to the President's most intimate friends in the Convention. It was therefore with minds absolutely untrammelled by even any knowledge of the President's wishes that the Convention went about its work of selecting his associate on the ticket.

It is altogether probable that the ticket of 1864 would have been nominated without a contest had it not been for the general impression, in and out of the Convention, that it would be advisable to select as a candidate for the Vice-Presidency a war Democrat. Mr. Dickinson, while not putting himself forward as a candidate, had sanctioned the use of his name by his friends on the especial ground

CHAP. III. that his candidacy might attract to the support of the Union party many Democrats who would have been unwilling to support a ticket avowedly Republican; but these considerations weighed with still greater force in favor of Mr. Johnson, who was not only a Democrat, but also a citizen of a border slaveholding State, and had rendered distinguished services to the Union cause. At the first show of hands it was at once evident that the Tennessean was stronger than the New Yorker, receiving four more votes than Mr. Dickinson even in the New York delegation. When the votes on the first ballot were counted it was found that Mr. Johnson had received 200, Mr. Hamlin 150, Mr. Dickinson 108; but before the result was announced almost the whole Convention turned their votes to Johnson, and on motion of Lyman Tremain of New York his nomination was declared unanimous. The work was quickly done. Mr. Lincoln, walking over to the War Department in the afternoon, as usual, for military news, received the dispatch announcing the nomination of Andrew Johnson before he was informed of his own. The telegram containing the news of his own nomination had gone to the White House a few minutes before.

June 8, 1864.

In the evening the National Grand Council of the Union League came together. A large proportion of its members had participated in the National Convention, and their action was therefore a foregone conclusion. They adopted a platform similar to that of the Convention, with the exception that they declared, as the Cleveland people had done, in favor of the confiscation of the property of rebels. They heartily approved and indorsed the

nominations already made, and passed a resolution to the effect that as Lincoln and Johnson were the only candidates who could hope to be elected as loyal men, they regarded it as the imperative duty of the Union League to do all that lay in its power to secure their election. They also earnestly approved and indorsed the platform and principles adopted by the Convention, and pledged themselves, as individuals and as members of the League, to do all in their power to elect the candidates. The seal of secrecy was removed from this action and a copy of the resolution transmitted to the President by W. R. Erwin, the Grand Recording Secretary.

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MS.

A committee, headed by Governor Dennison, came on the next day to notify the President of his nomination. "I need not say to you, sir," said Mr. Dennison, "that the Convention, in thus unanimously nominating you for reelection, but gave utterance to the almost universal voice of the loyal people of the country. To doubt of your triumphant election would be little short of abandoning the hope of the final suppression of the Rebellion and the restoration of the authority of the Government over the insurgent States."

Thursday,
June 9, 1864.

The President answered:

I will neither conceal my gratification nor restrain the expression of my gratitude that the Union people, through their Convention, in the continued effort to save and advance the nation, have deemed me not unworthy to remain in my present position. I know no reason to doubt that I shall accept the nomination tendered; and yet perhaps I should not declare definitely before reading and considering what is called the platform. I will say now, however, I approve the declaration in favor of so amending the Constitution as to prohibit slavery through-

CHAP. III. out the nation. When the people in revolt, with a hundred days of explicit notice that they could within those days resume their allegiance without the overthrow of their institutions, and that they could not resume it afterwards, elected to stand out, such amendment to the Constitution as is now proposed became a fitting and necessary conclusion to the final success of the Union cause. Such alone can meet and cover all cavils. Now the unconditional Union men, North and South, perceive its importance and embrace it. In the joint names of Liberty and Union, let us labor to give it legal form and practical effect.

Mc-
Pherson,
"History
of the
Rebellion,"
p. 408.

June 9, 1864. On the same day a committee of the Union League presented themselves to inform him of the action taken the night before. The President answered them more informally, saying that he did not allow himself to suppose that either the Convention or the League had concluded that he was either the greatest or the best man in America, but rather that they had decided that it was not best "to swap horses while crossing the river." All day the throngs of shouting and congratulating delegates filled the approaches to the Executive Mansion. In a brief speech at night, in answer to a serenade from citizens of Ohio, the President said: "What we want, still more than Baltimore conventions or Presidential elections, is success under General Grant. I propose that you constantly bear in mind that the support you owe to the brave officers and soldiers in the field is of the very first importance, and we should therefore bend all our energies to that point." He then proposed three cheers for General Grant and the officers and soldiers with him, and, swinging his own hat, led off in the cheering.

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The more formal notification of the Convention was made in a letter written by George William Curtis of New York, in which he paraphrased the platform and expressed the sentiment of the Convention and of the people of the country with his usual elegance and force. "They have watched your official course . . . with unflagging attention; and amid the bitter taunts of eager friends and the fierce denunciation of enemies, now moving too fast for some, now too slowly for others, they have seen you throughout this tremendous contest patient, sagacious, faithful, just; leaning upon the heart of the great mass of the people, and satisfied to be moved by its mighty pulsations. It is for this reason that, long before the Convention met, the popular instinct had plainly indicated you as its candidate, and the Convention therefore merely recorded the popular will. Your character and career prove your unswerving fidelity to the cardinal principles of American liberty and of the American Constitution. In the name of that liberty and Constitution, sir, we earnestly request your acceptance of this nomination, reverently commending our beloved country, and you, its Chief Magistrate, with all its brave sons who, on sea and land, are faithfully defending the good old American cause of equal rights, to the blessing of Almighty God."

Committee
to Lincoln,
June 14,
1864. MS.

In accepting the nomination the President observed the same wise rule of brevity which he had followed four years before. He made but one specific reference to any subject of discussion. While he accepted the resolution in regard to the supplanting of republican government upon the West-

CHAP. III. ern continent, he gave the Convention and the country distinctly to understand that he stood by the action already adopted by himself and the Secretary of State. He said: "There might be misunderstanding were I not to say that the position of the Government in relation to the action of France in Mexico, as assumed through the State Department and approved and indorsed by the Convention among the measures and acts of the Executive, will be faithfully maintained so long as the state of facts shall leave that position pertinent and applicable."

Lincoln to
Committee,
June 27,
1864. MS.

CHAPTER IV

THE RESIGNATION OF MR. CHASE

AFTER Mr. Chase's withdrawal from his hopeless contest for the Presidency, his sentiments towards Mr. Lincoln, as exhibited in his letters and his diary, took on a tinge of bitterness which gradually increased until their friendly association in the public service became no longer possible. There was something almost comic in the sudden collapse of his candidacy; and the American people, who are quick to detect the ludicrous in any event, could not help smiling when the States of Rhode Island and Ohio ranged themselves among the first on the side of the President. This was intolerable to Mr. Chase, who, with all his great and noble qualities, was deficient in humor. His wounded self-love could find no balm in these circumstances, except in the preposterous fiction which he constructed for himself that, through "the systematic operation of the Postmaster-General and those holding office under him a preference for the reelection of Mr. Lincoln was created." Absurd as this fancy was, he appears firmly to have believed it; and the Blairs, whom he never liked, now appeared to him in the light of powerful enemies. An incident which occurred in Congress in April increased this impression to a degree which was almost

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Chase to
General
Blunt,
May 4, 1864.
Warden,
"Life of
Salmon P.
Chase,"
p. 583.

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maddening to the Secretary. The quarrel between General Francis P. Blair, Jr., and the radicals in Missouri had been transferred to Washington; and one of the Missouri members having made charges against him of corrupt operations in trade permits, he demanded an investigation, which resulted, of course, in his complete exoneration from such imputations.

It was a striking instance of the bewildering power of factious hatred that such charges should ever have been brought. Any one who knew Blair, however slightly, should have known that personal dishonesty could never have offered him the least temptation. In defending himself on the floor of Congress the natural pugnacity of his disposition led him to what soldiers call an offensive return,—in fact, Frank Blair always preferred to do his fighting within the enemy's lines,—and believing the Secretary of the Treasury to be in sympathy, at least, with the assault which had been made upon his character, he attacked him with equal vigor and injustice by way of retaliation. As we have seen in another chapter, before this investigation was begun the President had promised when Blair should resign his seat in the House to restore him to the command in the Western army which he had relinquished on coming to Washington. Although he greatly disapproved of General Blair's attack upon Mr. Chase, the President did not think that he was justified on this account in breaking his word; and doubtless reasoned that sending Blair back to the army would not only enable him to do good service in the field, but would quiet an element of discord in Congress.

The result, however, was most unfortunate in its effect on the feelings of Mr. Chase. He was stung to the bitterest resentment by the attack of Blair; and he held that restoring Blair to his command made the President an accomplice in his offense. From that time he took a continually darkened view both of the President's character and of his chances for reelection. No good could come, he said, of the probable identification of the next Administration with the Blair family. His first thought was to resign his place in the Cabinet; though, on consulting his friends and finding them unanimous against such a course, he gave it up. But his letters during this month are full of ill-will to the President. To his niece he wrote: "If Congress gives me the measures I want, and Uncle Abe will stop spending so fast," he, Chase, would bring about resumption within a year. To another, he indirectly blamed the President for the slaughter at Fort Pillow. To Governor Buckingham, who had written him a sympathetic note, he said: "My chief concern in the attacks made on me springs from the conviction that the influence of the men who make them must necessarily divide the friends of the Union and freedom, unless the President shall cast it off, of which I have little hope. I am willing to be myself its victim, but grieve to think our country may be also"; and adds this compliment to his correspondent at the expense of his colleagues in the Government: "How strikingly the economy and prudence shown by the narration of your excellent message contrasts with the extravagance and recklessness which mark the disbursement of national treasure." Writing to another

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Chase to
Jay Cooke,
May 5, 1864.
Warden,
"Life of
Salmon P.
Chase,"
p. 584.

Chase to
D. T. Smith,
May 9, 1864.
Ibid., p. 587.

May 9, 1864.
Ibid.

CHAP. IV. friend, he indulges in this lumbering pleasantry :
 "It seems as if there were no limit to expense. . .
 The spigot in Uncle Abe's barrel is made twice as
 big as the bung-hole. He may have been a good
 flatboatman and rail-splitter, but he certainly never
 learned the true science of cooperating."

Warden,
 "Life of
 Salmon P.
 Chase,"
 p. 586.

This was a dark month to him; his only fortress
 of refuge was his self-esteem; secure in this, he
 lavished on every side his criticisms and his ani-
 madversions upon his associates. "Congress," he
 said, "is unwilling to take the decisive steps which
 are indispensable to the highest degree of public
 credit; and the Executive does not, I fear, suffi-
 ciently realize the importance of an energetic and
 comprehensive policy in all departments of admin-
 istration." Smarting as he did under the attack of
 the Blairs, he pretended to treat them with con-
 tempt. "Don't trouble yourself about the Blairs,"
 he wrote to an adherent. "Dogs will bark at
 the moon, but I have never heard that the moon
 stopped on that account." By constantly dwelling
 on the imaginary coalition of Lincoln with the
 Blairs against him, he began at last to take heart
 again, and to think that against adversaries so
 weak and so wicked there might still be a chance
 of victory. Only a fortnight before the gathering
 of the Republican Convention at Baltimore he began
 to look beyond the already certain event of that
 Convention, and to contemplate the possibility of
 defeating Mr. Lincoln after he should be nomi-
 nated.

Chase to
 Hamilton,
 May 13,
 1864. Ibid.,
 p. 590.

May 16, 1864.
 Ibid.,
 p. 591.

"It has become quite apparent now," he wrote,
 "that the importunity of Mr. Lincoln's special
 friends for an early convention, in order to make

his nomination sure, was a mistake both for him and for the country. The Convention will not be regarded as a Union convention, but simply as a Blair-Lincoln convention, by a great body of citizens whose support is essential to success. Few except those already committed to Mr. Lincoln will consider themselves bound by a predetermined nomination. Very many who may ultimately vote for Mr. Lincoln will wait the course of events, hoping that some popular movement for Grant or some other successful general will offer a better hope of saving the country. Others, and the number seems to be increasing, will not support his nomination in any event, believing that our ill-success thus far in the suppression of the rebellion is due mainly to his course of action and inaction, and that no change can be for the worse. But these are speculations merely from my standpoint."

The Secretary's relations with the President and his colleagues while he was in this mood were naturally subject to much friction, and this frame of mind had lasted with little variation for more than a year. It was impossible to get on with him except by constant agreement to all his demands. He chose in his letters and his diaries to represent himself as the one just and patriotic man in the Government, who was striving with desperate energy, but with little hope, to preserve the Administration from corrupt influences. It cannot be doubted that his motives were pure, his ability and industry unusual, his integrity, of course, beyond question. He held, and justly held, that, being responsible for the proper conduct of

Chase to
Brough,
May 19,
1864.
Warden,
"Life of
Salmon P.
Chase,"
p. 593.

CHAP. IV. affairs in his department, he should not be compelled to make appointments contrary to his convictions of duty. He was unquestionably right in insisting that appointments should be made on public grounds, and that only men of ability and character should be chosen to fill them; but he had an exasperating habit of assuming that nobody agreed with him in this view, and that all differences of opinion in regard to persons necessarily sprung from corrupt or improper motives on the part of those who differed with him. At the slightest word of disagreement he immediately put on his full armor of noble sentiments and phrases, appealed to Heaven for the rectitude of his intentions, and threatened to resign his commission if thwarted in his purpose. When he was not opposed he made his recommendations, as his colleagues did, on grounds of political expediency as well as of personal fitness. One day, for instance, he recommended the appointment of Reinhold Solger as Assistant Register of the Treasury on the ground that "the German supporters of the Administration have had no considerable appointment in the department."

He frequently gave, in support of his nominees, the recommendations of Senators and Representatives of the States where the appointments were to be made. But he always sturdily resented any suggestions from the President that an appointment proposed by him would have a bad effect politically. He had the faculty of making himself believe that his obstinacy in such matters arose purely from devotion to principle. He would not only weary the President with unending oral dis-

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cussions, but, returning to the department, would write him letters filled with high and irrelevant morality, and at evening would enter in his diary meditations upon his own purity and the perversity of those he chose to call his enemies. It would hardly be wise for the ablest man of affairs to assume such an attitude. To justify it at all one should be infallible in his judgment of men. With the Secretary of the Treasury this was far from being the case. He was not a good judge of character; he gave his confidence freely to any one who came flattering him and criticizing the President; and after having given it, it was almost impossible to make him believe that the man who talked so judiciously could be a knave. His chosen biographer, Judge Warden, says: "He was indeed sought less by strong men and by good men than by weak men and by bad men." A much better authority, White-law Reid, while giving him unmeasured praise for other qualities, calls him "profoundly ignorant of men," and says, "The baldest charlatan might deceive him into trusting his personal worth."

Warden,
"Life of
Salmon P.
Chase,"
p. 530.

Reid,
"Ohio in
the War,"
Vol. I.,
p. 18.

Early in the year 1864 the Federal appointments in New York City began to be the subject of frequent conversations between the President and the Secretary of the Treasury. So many complaints of irregularity and inefficiency in the conduct of affairs in the New York custom-house had reached Mr. Lincoln that he began to think a change in the officers there would be of advantage to the public service. Every suggestion of this sort, however, was met by Mr. Chase with passionate opposition. Mr. Lincoln had not lost confidence in the integrity or the high character of Hiram Barney, the collector of

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customs; he was even willing to give him an important appointment abroad in testimony of his continued esteem; but he was not satisfied with what he heard of the conduct of his office. Several of his subordinates had been detected in improper and corrupt practices, and after being defended by Mr. Chase until defense was impossible, they had been dismissed, and in some cases punished. In the month of February, while the conduct of the custom-house was under investigation in Congress, a special agent of the Treasury Department, named Joshua F. Bailey, came to Washington, having been summoned as a witness to testify before the committee of the House of Representatives in charge of the matter. He called on the chairman in advance, and endeavored to smother the investigation by saying, among other things, that, whatever might be developed, the President would in no case take any action.

The chairman of the committee reported this impudent statement to the President, who at once communicated the fact to the Secretary of the Treasury, saying, "The public interest cannot fail to suffer in the hands of this irresponsible and unscrupulous man"; and he proposed at the same time to send Mr. Barney as Minister to Portugal. Mr. Chase defended Bailey, and resisted with such energy the displacement of Mr. Barney that midsummer came with matters in the custom-house unchanged. Mr. Chase, in his diary, gives a full account of a conversation between himself and the President in regard to this matter, in which the Secretary reiterates his assurances of confidence in the conduct of the custom-house, and gives es-

Lincoln
to Chase,
Feb. 12,
1864.
Warden,
"Life of
Salmon P.
Chase,"
p. 572.

Ibid.,
pp. 601, 602.

pecially warm expression to his regard for Bailey, meeting the positive assertion of the chairman of the committee of the House of Representatives by saying, "I think Mr. Bailey is not the fool to have made such a suggestion." So long as he remained in office he gave this blind confidence to Bailey, who finally showed how ill he deserved it by the embezzlement of a large sum of public money, and by his flight in ruin and disgrace from the country.

In February, 1863, the Senate rejected the nomination of Mark Howard as collector of internal revenue for the district of Connecticut. Mr. Chase, hearing that this rejection was made at the instance of Senator Dixon, immediately wrote a letter demanding the renomination of Howard; or, if the President should not agree with him in this, of some one not recommended by Senator Dixon. A few days later the President wrote to Mr. Chase that after much reflection and with a great deal of pain that it was adverse to his wish, he had concluded that it was not best to renominate Mr. Howard. He recognized the constitutional right of the Senate to reject his nomination without being called to account; and to take the ground in advance that he would nominate no one for the vacant place who was favored by a Senator so eminent in character and ability as Mr. Dixon seemed to him preposterous. The only person from Connecticut recommended for the vacancy was Edward Goodman, in favor of whom Senator Dixon and Dwight Loomis, the Representative in the House, cordially united. The President therefore asked Mr. Chase to send him a nomination for

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June 6, 1864.

Mar. 2, 1863.
Warden,
"Life of
Salmon P.
Chase,"
p. 524.

CHAP. IV. Goodman. Immediately on the receipt of this letter Mr. Chase wrote out his resignation as Secretary of the Treasury in these words:

This was
indorsed
Mar. 3, 1864,
as being
withheld.
Warden,
"Life of
Salmon P.
Chase,"
pp. 524, 525.

Finding myself unable to approve the manner in which selections for appointment to important trusts in this department have been recently made, and being unwilling to remain responsible for its administration, under existing circumstances, I respectfully resign the office of Secretary of the Treasury.

This letter, however, never reached the President, as Senator Dixon came in before it was dispatched and discussed the matter in a spirit so entirely different from that of the Secretary that no quarrel was possible with him; and after he left, Mr. Chase wrote a letter to the President, in which he said: "I do not insist on the renomination of Mr. Howard; and Mr. Dixon and Mr. Loomis, as I understand, do not claim the nomination of his successor. . . My only object — and I think you so understand it — is to secure fit men for responsible places, without admitting the rights of Senators or Representatives to control appointments for which the President, and the Secretary as his presumed adviser, must be responsible. Unless this principle can be practically established, I feel that I cannot be useful to you or the country in my present position."

Mar. 2, 1863.
Autograph
MS.

It is possible that the Secretary may have thought that this implied threat to resign brought both the President and the Senator to reason, for the matter ended at this time by their allowing him to have absolutely his own way. Mr. Dixon wrote to the President, saying that he "preferred to leave the whole matter to the Secretary of the Treasury, be-

Dixon
to Lincoln,
Mar. 5, 1863.
MS.

lieving his choice would be such as to advance the interests of the country and the Administration"; and the President, who heartily detested these squabbles over office, was glad of this arrangement. There was not a shade of difference between him and Mr. Chase as to the duty of the Administration to appoint only fit men to office, but the President always preferred to effect this object without needlessly offending the men upon whom the Government depended for its support in the war.

A few months later Mr. Lincoln was subjected to great trouble and inconvenience by the constant complaints which came to him by every mail from Puget Sound against the collector for that district, one Victor Smith, from Ohio, a friend and appointee of Mr. Chase. This Smith is described by Schuckers¹ as "a man not very likely to become popular on the Pacific coast—or anywhere else. He believed in spirit rappings and was an avowed abolitionist; he whined a great deal about 'progress'; was somewhat arrogant in manner and intolerant in speech, and speedily made himself thoroughly unpopular in his office."

No attention was paid by the Secretary to these complaints, which were from time to time referred to him by the President; but at last the clamor by letter and by deputations from across the continent became intolerable, and the President, during a somewhat protracted absence of the Secretary from Washington, ordered a change to be made in the office. In a private note to Mr. Chase, wishing

¹ Mr. Schuckers was private secretary to Mr. Chase and author of a biography of him, *q. v.*, p. 493.

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to avoid giving him personal offense, he said: "My mind is made up to remove Victor Smith as collector of the customs at the Puget Sound district. Yet in doing this I do not decide that the charges against him are true. I only decide that the degree of dissatisfaction with him there is too great for him to be retained. But I believe he is your personal acquaintance and friend, and if you desire it I will try to find some other place for him."

Lincoln to
Chase,
May 8, 1863.
MS.

Three days later the Secretary, having returned to Washington, answered in his usual manner, protesting once more his ardent desire to serve the country faithfully, and claiming that he had a right to be consulted in matters of appointment. He sent a blank commission for the person whom the President had concluded to appoint, but protested against the precedent, and tendered his resignation. This time again the President gave way. He drove to the Secretary's house, handed his petulant letter back to him, and begged him to think no more of the matter.¹ Two days afterwards, in a letter assenting to other recommendations for office which had come to him from the Treasury Department, he said, "Please send me over the commission for Lewis C. Gunn, as you recommend, for collector of customs at Puget Sound."

May 13, 1863.

Warden,
"Life of
Salmon P.
Chase,"
p. 528.

Any statesman possessing a sense of humor would have hesitated before repeating this identical pro-

¹ Maunsell B. Field, in his paper with which I wish to have "Memories of Many Men, And of Some Women," p. 303, quotes Mr. Lincoln as saying: "I went directly up to him with the resignation in my hand, and, putting my arm around his neck, said to him, 'Chase, here is a nothing to do; take it back and be reasonable.' . . . It was difficult to bring him to terms. I had to plead with him a long time; but I finally succeeded, and heard nothing more of that resignation."

ceeding; but, as we have said, Mr. Chase was deficient in this saving sense, and he apparently saw no reason why it should not be repeated indefinitely.

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John J. Cisco, the assistant treasurer at New York, who had served the Government with remarkable ability and efficiency through three Administrations, resigned his commission in May, to take effect at the close of the fiscal year, the 30th of June, 1864. It was a post of great importance in a financial point of view, and not insignificant in the way of political influence. Up to this time Mr. Chase had made all the important appointments in New York from his own wing of the supporters of the Union — the men who had formerly been connected with the Democratic party, and who now belonged to what was called the radical wing of the Republican. This matter was the source of constant complaint from those who were sometimes called the Conservative Republicans of New York, or those who had in great part formerly belonged to the Whig party, and who in later years acknowledged the leadership of Mr. Seward.

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The President was anxious that in an appointment so important as that which was now about to be made both sections of the party in New York should, if possible, be satisfied; and especially that no nominations should be made which should be positively objectionable to Senator Morgan, who was considered to represent more especially the city of New York and its great commercial interests. To this Mr. Chase at first interposed no objection; and it was upon full and friendly consultation and conference between him and Senator Morgan that the appointment was offered succes-

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sively to Denning Duer and to John A. Stewart, both of them gentlemen of the highest standing. But both declined the office tendered them; upon which Mr. Chase suddenly resolved to appoint Maunsell B. Field, who was at that time an assistant secretary of the Treasury. Mr. Field was a gentleman of excellent social position, of fine literary culture, to whom the Secretary was sincerely attached, but who was entirely destitute of such standing in either the political or the financial circles of New York as was required by so important a place. Senator Morgan at once protested vigorously against such an appointment, which only served to confirm the Secretary in his insistence upon it. Besides his objections to Mr. Field, whom he thought in no way competent to hold such a place, Mr. Morgan urged that the political result of his appointment would be extremely unfavorable to the Union party in New York. He became thoroughly alarmed, and begged the Secretary and the President successively to make their choice among three of the most eminent citizens of New York, whose names he presented; but the Secretary's mind was made up. Without further consultation with the President, he sent him the nomination for Mr. Field on the 27th of June.

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The next day the President replied: "I can not without much embarrassment make this appointment, principally because of Senator Morgan's very firm opposition to it. Senator Harris has not spoken to me on the subject, though I understand he is not averse to the appointment of Mr. Field, nor yet to any one of the three named by Senator Morgan. . . Governor Morgan tells me he

has mentioned the three names to you, to wit: R. M. Blatchford, Dudley S. Gregory, and Thomas Hillhouse. It will really oblige me if you will make choice among these three, or any other man that Senators Morgan and Harris will be satisfied with, and send me a nomination for him."

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Lincoln to
Chase,
June 28,
1864. MS.

There have been few ministers who would have refused so reasonable and considerate a request as this, but it did not for a moment shake Mr. Chase's determination to have his own way in the matter. He sent a note to the President asking for an interview, and telegraphed to Mr. Cisco, begging him most earnestly to withdraw his resignation and give the country the benefit of his services at least one quarter longer. He was determined, in one way or another, that neither the President nor the Senators from New York should have anything to say in regard to this appointment; and conscious of his own blamelessness in all the controversy, he went home and wrote in his diary: "Oh, for more faith and clearer sight! How stable is the city of God! How disordered is the city of man!" The same day the President wrote him:

Chase
to Lincoln,
June 28,
1864. MS.

Warden,
"Life of
Salmon P.
Chase,"
p. 612.

When I received your note this forenoon suggesting a verbal conversation in relation to the appointment of a successor to Mr. Cisco, I hesitated, because the difficulty does not, in the main part, lie within the range of a conversation between you and me. As the proverb goes, no man knows so well where the shoe pinches as he who wears it. I do not think Mr. Field a very proper man for the place, but I would trust your judgment and forego this were the greater difficulty out of the way. Much as I personally like Mr. Barney, it has been a great burden to me to retain him in his place when nearly all our friends in New York were directly or indirectly urging his removal. Then the appointment of Judge Hoge-

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Lincoln
to Chase,
June 28,
1864. MS.

boom to be general appraiser brought me to, and has ever since kept me at, the verge of open revolt. Now the appointment of Mr. Field would precipitate me in it, unless Senator Morgan, and those feeling as he does, could be brought to concur in it. Strained as I already am at this point, I do not think that I can make this appointment in the direction of still greater strain.

In the evening the extremely tense situation was relieved by a telegram from Mr. Cisco complying with the request of the Secretary to remain another quarter. But it was not in the nature of Mr. Chase to accept this simple denouement. He felt that the President had acted badly, and must be subjected to some discipline; and he naturally resorted to those measures which had hitherto proved so effective. He wrote to him:

Chase
to Lincoln,
June 29,
1864. MS.

The withdrawal of Mr. Cisco's resignation, which I inclose, relieves the present difficulty; but I cannot help feeling that my position here is not altogether agreeable to you, and it is certainly too full of embarrassment and difficulty and painful responsibility to allow in me the least desire to retain it. I think it my duty, therefore, to inclose to you my resignation. I shall regard it as a real relief if you think proper to accept it, and will most cheerfully render to my successor any aid he may find useful in entering upon his duties.

In this letter Mr. Chase inclosed his formal resignation. The President received this note while very much occupied with other affairs. The first paper which met his eyes was the telegram from Mr. Cisco withdrawing his resignation. Glad that the affair was so happily terminated, he laid the packet aside for some hours, without looking at the other papers contained in it. The next morning, wishing to write a congratulatory note to Mr. Chase upon this welcome termination of the crisis, he found, to his bitter

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chagrin and disappointment, that the Secretary had once more tendered his resignation. He took it to mean precisely what the Secretary had intended — that if he were to retain Mr. Chase as Secretary of the Treasury, it should not be hereafter as a subordinate; to refuse this resignation, to go once more to the Secretary and urge him to remain, would amount to an abdication of his constitutional powers. He therefore, without hesitation, sent him this letter: "Your resignation of the office of Secretary of the Treasury, sent me yesterday, is accepted. Of all I have said in commendation of your ability and fidelity I have nothing to unsay, and yet you and I have reached a point of mutual embarrassment in our official relation which it seems can not be overcome or longer sustained consistently with the public service."

Lincoln to
Chase,
June 30,
1864. MS.

At the same time he sent to the Senate the nomination of David Tod of Ohio as Secretary of the Treasury. Most people have chosen to consider this a singular selection. Yet David Tod was by no means an unknown man. He had gained an honorable position at the bar; had been the Democratic candidate for governor in 1844; had served with credit as minister to Brazil; was first vice-president of the Charleston Convention and became its president at Baltimore on the secession of Caleb Cushing; was one of the most prominent men in Ohio in railroad and mining enterprises; had been the most eminent and efficient of the war Democrats of the State; and as Governor had shown executive capacity of a high order. There were some superficial points of resemblance between Mr. Chase and Governor Tod that doubtless

Reid,
"Ohio in
the War,"
Vol. I.,
p. 64.

CHAP. IV. caught the attention of the President in choosing a successor to the former in such haste. Tod was a citizen of the same State with Chase, of which both had been governor; he had come into the Union party from the Democrats; he was a man of unusually dignified and impressive presence; but it is safe to say that no one had ever thought of him for the place now vacant.

The nomination was presented to the Senate at its opening and was received with amazement. Not the least surprised of the statesmen in the Capitol was Mr. Chase himself, who was busy at the moment in one of the committee rooms of the Senate arranging some legislation which he needed for his department. There are many indications which go to show that his resignation of the evening before was intended, like those which had preceded it, as a means of discipline for the President. After sending it he wrote to Mr. Cisco expressing his thanks for the withdrawal of his resignation, and saying: "It relieves me from a very painful embarrassment. . . I could not remain here and see your office made parcel of the machinery of party, or even feel serious apprehensions that it might be." Even on the morning of the 30th of June, Mr. Chase wrote to the President recommending a considerable increase of taxation, saying that there would be a deficit by existing laws of about eighty millions. On the other hand, there is nothing to show, up to the instant that he was informed of the nomination of Tod, that he expected his official career to end on that day.

The news for the moment created something like consternation in political circles at the capital. Mr.

Schuckers,
"Life of
S. P.
Chase,"
p. 508.
1864.

MS.



WILLIAM PITT FESSENDEN.

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Washburne hurried to the White House, saying the change was disastrous; that at this time of military unsuccess, financial weakness, congressional hesitation on questions of conscription, and imminent famine in the West, it was ruinous. The Senate Committee on Finance, to which the nomination of Tod had been referred, came down in a body to talk with the President about it. The President gave this account of the interview: "Fessenden was frightened, Conness was angry, Sherman thought we could not have gotten on together much longer anyhow, Cowan and Van Winkle were indifferent." They not only objected to any change, but specially protested against the nomination of Tod as too little known and too inexperienced for the place. The President replied that he had little personal acquaintance with Tod, that he had nominated him on account of the high opinion he had formed of him as Governor of Ohio; but that the Senate had the duty and responsibility of passing upon the question of fitness, in which it must be entirely untrammelled; he could not, in justice to himself or to Tod, withdraw the nomination.

J. H.,
Diary.

The impression of the undesirability of the change rather deepened during the day. Mr. Hooper of Massachusetts, an intimate friend of both the President and Mr. Chase, and the man upon whom both principally relied for the conduct of financial legislation in the House, spoke of the crisis in deep depression. He said he had been for some time of the opinion that Mr. Chase did not see his way entirely clear to raising the funds which were necessary; that his supplementary demand for

CHAP. IV. money sent in at the close of the session after everything had been granted which he asked, looked like an intention to throw an anchor to windward in case he was refused. Mr. Hooper said he had waked that morning feeling a little vexed that Chase had done this, that he thought it was an attempt to throw an unfair responsibility upon Congress; but now this resignation came to relieve him of all responsibility; his successor would have an enormous work to do; the future was troubled; there remained the great practical problem, regularly recurring, to raise one hundred millions a month. "I do not clearly see," he said, "how it is to be done; the talent of finance in its national aspect is something entirely different from banking. Most bankers criticize Mr. Chase, but he has a faculty of using the knowledge and experience of others to the best advantage; that has sufficed him hitherto; a point has been reached where he does not clearly see what comes next, and at this point the President allows him to step from under his load."

J. H.,
Diary.

1864.

This view of the case has a color of confirmation in a passage of the diary of Mr. Chase of the 30th of June, which goes to show at least a mixed motive in his resignation. After his resignation had been accepted, Mr. Hooper had called upon him, and, evidently hoping that some reconciliation was still possible, told him that, several days before, the President had spoken to him in terms of high esteem, indicating his purpose of making him Chief Justice in the event of a vacancy, a post which Mr. Chase had long before told the President was the one he most desired. Mr. Chase answered that had

such expression of good-will reached him in time it might have prevented the present misunderstanding, but that now he could not change his position. "Besides," he adds, "I did not see how I could carry on the department without more means than Congress was likely to supply, and amid the embarrassments created by factious hostility within and both factious and party hostility without the department."

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Chase,
Diary.
Warden,
"Life of
Salmon P.
Chase,"
p. 510.

At night the President received a dispatch from Mr. Tod declining the appointment on the ground of ill-health. The President's secretary went immediately to the Capitol to communicate this information to the Senators, so that no vote might be taken on the nomination. Early the next morning the President sent to the Senate the nomination of William Pitt Fessenden, Senator from Maine. When he gave the nomination to his secretary, the latter informed him that Mr. Fessenden was then in the ante-room waiting to see him. He answered, "Start at once for the Senate, and then let Fessenden come in." The Senator, who was chairman of the Senate Committee on Finance, began immediately to discuss the question of the vacant place in the Treasury, suggesting the name of Hugh McCulloch. The President listened to him for a moment with a smile of amusement, and then told him that he had already sent *his* nomination to the Senate. Fessenden leaped to his feet, exclaiming, "You must withdraw it. I cannot accept." "If you decline," said the President, "you must do it in open day, for I shall not recall the nomination." "We talked about it for some time," said the President, "and he went away less decided in his refusal."

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J. H.,
Diary.

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The nomination was instantly confirmed, the executive session lasting no more than a minute. There seemed to be no difference of opinion in regard to Mr. Fessenden ; the only fear was that he would not accept. His first impulse was to decline ; but being besieged all day by the flattering solicitations of his friends, it was impossible for him to persist in refusing. The President was equally surprised and gratified at the enthusiastic and general approval the nomination had met with. He said : " It is very singular, considering that this appointment is so popular when made, that no one ever mentioned his name to me for that place. Thinking over the matter, two or three points occurred to me : first, his thorough acquaintance with the business ; as Chairman of the Senate Committee of Finance, he knows as much of this special subject as Mr. Chase ; he possesses a national reputation and the confidence of the country ; he is a Radical without the petulant and vicious fretfulness of many Radicals. There are reasons why this appointment ought to be very agreeable to him. For some time past he has been running in rather a pocket of bad luck ; the failure to renominate Mr. Hamlin makes possible a contest between him and the Vice-President, the most popular man in Maine, for the election which is now imminent. A little while ago in the Senate you know Trumbull told him his ill-temper had left him no friends, but this sudden and most gratifying manifestation of good feeling over his appointment, his instantaneous confirmation, the earnest entreaties of everybody that he should accept, cannot but be very grateful to his feelings."

J. H.,
Diary.J. H.,
Diary.

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Mr. Chase left a full record in his diaries and letters of the sense of injury and wrong done him by the President. He especially resented the President's reference to the "embarrassment in our official relations." "I had found a good deal of embarrassment from him," he said; "but what he had found from me I could not imagine, unless it has been caused by my unwillingness to have offices distributed as spoils or benefits. . . He has never given me the active and earnest support I was entitled to." After Mr. Fessenden was appointed, the ex-Secretary entered in his diary his approval of the selection: "He has the confidence of the country, and many who have become inimical to me will give their confidence to him and their support. Perhaps they will do more than they otherwise would to sustain him, in order to show how much better a Secretary he is than I was."

Warden,
"Life of
Salmon P.
Chase,"
pp. 619, 620.

Before Mr. Fessenden accepted his appointment he called on Mr. Chase and conversed fully with him on the subject. Mr. Chase frankly and cordially advised him to accept, telling him that all the great work of the department was now fairly blocked out and in progress, that the organization was planned and in many ways complete, and all in a state which admitted of completion. His most difficult task would be to provide money. "But he would have advantages," said Mr. Chase, "which I had not. . . Those persons [to whom I had given offense] would have no cause of ill-will against him, and would very probably come to his support with zeal increased by their ill-will to me; so my damage would be to his advantage, especially with a certain class of capitalists and bankers."

Ibid., p. 621.

CHAP. IV.

1864.

Warden,
"Life of
Salmon P.
Chase,"
p. 622.

Ibid., p. 623.

Ibid., p. 624.

The entries in Mr. Chase's diary continue for several days in the same strain. He congratulates himself on his own integrity; he speaks with severity of the machinations of imaginary enemies. On the 2d of July he remarks the passage of the bill giving the Secretary of the Treasury control over trade in the rebel States and authority to lease abandoned property and to care for the freedmen, and adds: "How much good I expected to accomplish under this bill! Will my successor do this work? I fear not. He had not the same heart for this measure that I had." On the Fourth of July the ringing of bells, the firing of cannon, and the snapping of crackers awoke him to the reflection that "if the Government had been willing to do justice, and had used its vast powers with equal energy and wisdom, the struggle might have been happily terminated long ago." Later in the same day Mr. Fessenden came to see him, and informed him that he had been discussing with the President the subject of appointments in the Treasury Department, and that Mr. Lincoln had requested him not to remove any friends of Governor Chase unless there should be a real necessity for it. Mr. Chase persuaded himself that if the President had spoken to him in that tone he would have withdrawn his resignation. "Why did he not?" he mused. "I can see but one reason—that I am too earnest, too antislavery, and, say, too radical to make him willing to have me connected with the Administration: just as my opinion that he is not earnest enough, not antislavery enough, not radical enough, but goes naturally with those hostile to me, rather than with me, makes me willing and glad to be disconnected from it."

How far his animosity against the President had misled this able, honest, pure, and otherwise sagacious man may be seen in one single phrase. Referring to the President's refusal to sign the reconstruction bill, he put down his deliberate opinion that neither the President nor his chief advisers had abandoned the idea of possible reconstruction with slavery; and this in spite of the President's categorical statement, "While I remain in my present position I shall not attempt to retract or modify the Emancipation Proclamation, nor shall I return to slavery any person who is free by the terms of that proclamation or by any of the acts of Congress," and of his declaration that such action would be "a cruel and an astounding breach of faith." But after all these expressions of that petulant injustice which was only a foible in a noble character, the greatest financial Secretary which the country had known since Hamilton had a perfect right, in laying down the high office he had borne with such integrity and such signal success, to indulge in the meditation which we find in his diary of June 30:

"So my official life closes. I have laid broad foundations. Nothing but wise legislation and especially bold yet judicious provision of taxes, with fair economy in administration and energetic yet prudent military action, . . . seems necessary to insure complete success."

CHAP. IV.

Warden,
"Life of
Salmon P.
Chase,"
p. 623.

Annual
Message,
Dec. 8, 1863.

1864.

Warden,
"Life of
Salmon P.
Chase,"
p. 617.

CHAPTER V

THE WADE-DAVIS MANIFESTO

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IN his message to Congress of the 8th of December, 1863, Mr. Lincoln gave expression to his ideas on the subject of reconstruction more fully and clearly than ever before. He appended to that message a proclamation of the same date guaranteeing a full pardon to all who had been implicated in the Rebellion, with certain specified exceptions, on the condition of taking and maintaining an oath to support, protect, and defend the Constitution of the United States and the Union of the States thereunder; to abide by and support all acts of Congress and Proclamations of the President made during the Rebellion with reference to slaves, so long and so far as not repealed, modified, or held void by Congress or by decision of the Supreme Court. The exceptions to this general amnesty were of those who, having held places of honor and trust under the Government of the United States, had betrayed this trust and entered the service of the Confederacy, and of those who had been guilty of treatment of colored troops not justified by the laws of war. The proclamation further promised that when in any of the States in rebellion a number of citizens equal to one-tenth of

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the voters in the year 1860 should reestablish a State government republican in form, and not contravening the oath above mentioned, such should be recognized as the true government of the State, and should receive the benefits of the constitutional provision that "The United States shall guarantee to every State in this Union a republican form of government, and shall protect each of them against invasion; and, on application of the Legislature, or the Executive (when the Legislature cannot be convened), against domestic violence."

Lincoln,
Proclamation,
Dec. 8, 1863.

The President also engaged by this proclamation not to object to any provision which might be adopted by such State governments in relation to the freed people of the States which should recognize and declare their permanent freedom and provide for their education, "and which may yet be consistent, as a temporary arrangement, with their present condition as a laboring, landless, and homeless class." He suggested that in reconstructing the loyal State governments, the names, the boundaries, the subdivisions, the constitutions, and the general codes of laws of the States should be preserved. He stated distinctly that his proclamation had no reference to States where the loyal State governments had all the while been maintained; he took care to make it clear that the respective houses, and not the executive, had the constitutional power to decide whether Members sent to Congress from any State should be admitted to seats; and he concluded by saying: "This proclamation is intended to present the people of the States wherein the national authority has been

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Lincoln,
Proclamation,
Dec. 8, 1863.

Dec. 8, 1863.

The message contained an unusually forcible and luminous expression of the principles embraced in the proclamation. The President referred to the dark and doubtful days which followed the announcement of the policy of emancipation and of the employment of black soldiers; the gradual justification of those acts by the successes which the National arms had since achieved; of the change of the public spirit of the border States in favor of emancipation; the enlistment of black soldiers, and their efficient and creditable behavior in arms; the absence of any tendency to servile insurrection or to violence and cruelty among the negroes; the sensible improvement in the public opinion of Europe and of America. He then ex-

Dec. 8, 1863.

¹ In some instances this proclamation was misunderstood by generals and commanders of departments, so that prisoners of war were allowed on their voluntary application to take the amnesty oath. This was not the President's intention, and would have led to serious embarrassment in the matter of the exchange of prisoners.

He, therefore, on the 26th of March, 1864, issued a supplementary proclamation declaring that the proclamation applied

“only to those persons who, being yet at large and free from any arrest, confinement, or duress, shall voluntarily come forward and take the said oath with the purpose of restoring peace and establishing the national authority”; and that “prisoners excluded from the amnesty offered in the said proclamation may apply to the President for clemency, like all other offenders, and that their applications will receive due consideration.”

plained the purpose and spirit of his proclamation. Nothing had been attempted beyond what was amply justified by the Constitution; the form of an oath had been given, but no man was coerced to take it; the Constitution authorized the Executive to grant or withhold a pardon at his own absolute discretion, and this included the power to grant on terms, as was fully established by judicial authority. He therefore referred to the provision of the Constitution guaranteeing to the States a republican form of government as providing precisely for the case then under treatment; where the element within a State favorable to republican government in the Union might "be too feeble for an opposite and hostile element external to or even within the State."

"An attempt," said the President, "to guaranty and protect a revived State government constructed in whole or in preponderating part from the very element against whose hostility and violence it is to be protected, is simply absurd. There must be a test by which to separate the opposing elements, so as to build only from the sound; and that test is a sufficiently liberal one which accepts as sound whoever will make a sworn recantation of his former unsoundness." In justification of his requiring in the oath of amnesty a submission to and support of the antislavery laws and proclamations, he said: "Those laws and proclamations were enacted and put forth for the purpose of aiding in the suppression of the Rebellion. To give them their fullest effect, there had to be a pledge for their maintenance. In my judgment they have aided and will further aid the cause for which they

Lincoln,
Message,
Dec. 8, 1863.

CHAP. V. were intended. To now abandon them would be not only to relinquish a lever of power, but would also be a cruel and an astounding breach of faith. I may add, at this point, that while I remain in my present position I shall not attempt to retract or modify the Emancipation Proclamation, nor shall I return to slavery any person who is free by the terms of that proclamation or by any of the acts of Congress."

The President called attention to the fact that that part of the oath was subject to the modifying and abrogating power of legislation and supreme judicial decision; that the whole purpose and spirit of the proclamation was permissive and not mandatory. "The proposed acquiescence," he said, "of the National Executive in any reasonable temporary State arrangement for the freed people is made with the view of possibly modifying the confusion and destitution which must at best attend all classes by a total revolution of labor throughout whole States. It is hoped that the already deeply afflicted people in those States may be somewhat more ready to give up the cause of their affliction if, to this extent, this vital matter be left to themselves, while no power of the National Executive to prevent an abuse is abridged by the proposition." He had taken the utmost pains to avoid the danger of committal on points which could be more safely left to further developments. "Saying that on certain terms certain classes will be pardoned with rights restored, it is not said that other classes or other terms will never be included; saying that reconstruction will be accepted if presented in a specified way, it is

not said it will never be accepted in any other way." The President expressed his profound congratulation at the movement towards emancipation by the several States, and urged once more upon Congress the importance of aiding these steps to the great consummation.

It is rare that so important a state paper has been received with such unanimous tokens of enthusiastic adhesion. However the leading Republicans in Congress may have been led later in the session to differ with the President, there was apparently no voice of discord raised on the day the message was read to both Houses. For a moment all factions in Congress seemed to be of one mind. One who spent the morning on the floor of Congress wrote on the same day: "Men acted as though the millennium had come. Chandler was delighted, Sumner was joyous, apparently forgetting for the moment his doctrine of State suicide;¹ while at the other political pole Dixon and Reverdy Johnson said the message was highly satisfactory." Henry Wilson said to the President's secretary: "He has struck another great blow. Tell him for me, God bless him." The effect was similar in the House of Representatives. George S. Boutwell, who represented the extreme antislavery element of New England, said: "It is a very able and shrewd paper. It has great points of popularity, and it is right." Owen Lovejoy, the leading abolitionist of the West, seemed to see on the mountain the feet of one bringing good tidings. "I shall live," he said, "to see slavery ended in America." James A. Garfield gave his unreserved

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Dec., 1863.

J. H.,
Diary.

¹ See resolutions introduced in the Senate, Feb. 11, 1862.

CHAP. V. approval; Francis W. Kellogg of Michigan went shouting about the lobby: "The President is the only man. There is none like him in the world. He sees more widely and more clearly than any of us." Henry T. Blow, the radical member from St. Louis (who six months later was denouncing Mr. Lincoln as a traitor to freedom), said: "God bless old Abe! I am one of the Radicals who have always believed in him." Horace Greeley, who was on the floor of the House, went so far as to say the message was "devilish good." The Executive Mansion was filled all day by a rush of Congressmen, congratulating the President and assuring him of their support in his wise and humane policy. The conservatives and radicals vied with each other in claiming that the message represented their own views of the crisis. N. B. Judd of Illinois said to the President: "The opinion of people who read your message to-day is, that on that platform two of your ministers must walk the plank — Blair and Bates." To which the President answered: "Both of these men acquiesced in it without objection; the only member of the cabinet who objected was Mr. Chase." For a moment the most prejudiced Democrats found little to say against the message; they called it "very ingenious and cunning, admirably calculated to deceive."

This reception of the message was extremely pleasing to the President. A solution of the most important problem of the time, which conservatives like Dixon and Reverdy Johnson thoroughly approved, and to which Mr. Sumner made no objection, was of course a source of profound gratification. He took it as a proof of what he had often

said, that there was no essential contest between loyal men on this subject if they would consider it reasonably. He said in conversation on the 10th of December: "The only question is, Who constitute the State? When that is decided, the solution of subsequent questions is easy." He wrote in his original draft of the message that he considered "the discussion as to whether a State had been at any time out of the Union as vain and profitless. We know they were, we trust they shall be, in the Union. It does not greatly matter whether in the mean time they shall be considered to have been in or out." But afterwards, considering that the Constitution empowered him to grant protection to States "in the Union," he saw that it would not answer to admit that the States had at any time been out of it; he erased that sentence, as possibly suggestive of evil. He preferred, he said, "to stand firmly based on the Constitution rather than to work in the air." He was specially gratified by reports which came to him of the adhesion of the Missourians in Congress to his view. "I know," he said, "these radical men have in them the stuff which must save the State, and on which we must mainly rely. They are absolutely incorrosive by the virus of secession. It cannot touch or taint them; while the conservatives, in casting about for votes to carry through their plans, are attempting to affiliate with those whose record is not clear. If one side must be crushed out and the other cherished, there cannot be any doubt which side we must choose as fuller of hope for the future; but just there," he continued, "is where their wrong begins. They insist that I shall hold and treat

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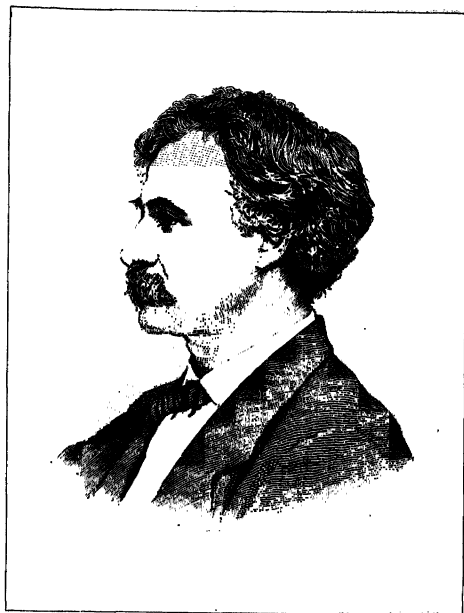
CHAP. V. Governor Gamble and his supporters, men appointed by the loyal people of Missouri, as representatives of Missouri loyalty, and who have done their whole duty in the war faithfully and promptly, who when they have disagreed with me have been silent and kept about the good work — that I shall treat these men as copperheads and enemies of the Government. This is simply monstrous.”

J. H.,
Diary.

For the first few days there was no hint of any hostile feeling in Congress. There was, in fact, no just reason why the legislative body should regard its prerogative as invaded. The President had not only kept clearly within his Constitutional powers, but his action had been expressly authorized by Congress. The act of July 17, 1862, had provided that the President might thereafter at any time, by proclamation, extend pardon and amnesty to persons participating in the Rebellion, “with such exceptions and at such time and on such conditions as he may deem expedient for the public welfare.” Of course a general amnesty required general conditions; and the most important of these was one which should provide for the protection of the freedmen who had been liberated by the war.

Appendix,
“Globe,”
July 17,
1862, p. 413.

It soon enough appeared, however, that the millennium had not arrived; that in a Congress composed of men of such positive convictions and vehement character there were many who would not submit permanently to the leadership of any man, least of all to that of one so gentle, so reasonable, so devoid of malice as the President. Henry Winter Davis at once moved that that part of the message relating to reconstruction should be referred to a special committee, of which he was



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made chairman; and on the 15th of February he reported "a bill to guarantee to certain States whose governments have been usurped or overthrown a republican form of government." Mr. Davis was a man of too much integrity and elevation of character to allow the imputation that his action on public matters was dictated entirely by personal feeling or prejudice; but at the same time it cannot be denied that he maintained towards the President, from beginning to end of his administration, an attitude of consistent hostility. This was a source of chagrin and disappointment to Mr. Lincoln. He came to Washington with a high opinion of the ability and the character of Mr. Davis, and expected to maintain with him relations of intimate friendship. He was cousin to one of the President's closest friends in Illinois, Judge David Davis, and his attitude in the Congress which preceded the Rebellion was such as to arouse in the mind of Mr. Lincoln the highest admiration and regard. But the selection of Mr. Blair of Maryland as a member of the Cabinet estranged the sympathies of Mr. Davis and his friends; and the breach thus made between him and the Administration was never healed, though the President did all in his power to heal it. In the spring of 1863 Mr. Davis, assuming that the President might be inclined to favor unduly the conservative candidate in the election for the next Congress, sought an interview with him, the result of which the President placed in writing in a letter dated March 18:

There will be in the new House of Representatives, as there were in the old, some members openly opposing the war, some supporting it unconditionally, and some sup-

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"Globe,"
Feb. 15, 1864,
p. 668.

1863.

CHAP. V. porting it with "buts," and "ifs," and "ands." They will divide on the organization of the House — on the election of a Speaker. As you ask my opinion, I give it, that the supporters of the war should send no man to Congress who will not pledge himself to go into caucus with the unconditional supporters of the war, and to abide the action of such caucus and vote for the person therein nominated for Speaker. Let the friends of the Government first save the Government, and then administer it to their own liking.

Lincoln
to Davis.
MS.

Davis
to Lincoln
Mar. 20,
1863. MS.

Mr. Davis answered: "Your favor of the 18th is all that could be desired, and will greatly aid us in bringing our friends to a conclusion such as the interests of the country require."

In spite of all the efforts which the President made to be on friendly terms with Mr. Davis, the difference between them constantly widened. Mr. Davis grew continually more confirmed in his attitude of hostility to every proposition of the President. He became one of the most severe and least generous critics of the Administration in Congress. He came at last to consider the President as unworthy of even respectful treatment; and Mr. Seward, in the midst of his energetic and aggressive campaign against European unfriendliness, was continually attacked by him as a truckler to foreign powers and little less than a traitor to his country. The President, however, was a man so persistently and incorrigibly just, that, even in the face of this provocation, he never lost his high opinion of Mr. Davis's ability nor his confidence in his inherent good intentions. He refused, in spite of the solicitations of most of his personal friends in Maryland, to discriminate against the faction headed by Mr. Davis in making appointments to office in that

State; and when, during an important campaign, a deputation of prominent supporters of the Administration in Maryland came to Washington to denounce Mr. Davis for his outspoken hostility to the President, saying that such a course, if it continued unchecked, would lose Mr. Lincoln the electoral vote of the State, he replied: "I understand that Mr. Davis is doing all in his power to secure the success of the emancipation ticket in Maryland. If he does this, I care nothing about the electoral vote."

In the preamble to his bill Mr. Davis expressed, with his habitual boldness and lucidity, his fundamental thesis that the rebellious States were out of the Union. He said:

Whereas, the so-called Confederate States are a public enemy, waging an unjust war, whose injustice is so glaring that they have no right to claim the mitigation of the extreme rights of war which are accorded by modern usage to an enemy who has a right to consider the war a just one; and,

Whereas, none of the States which, by a regularly recorded majority of its citizens, have joined the so-called Southern Confederacy can be considered and treated as entitled to be represented in Congress or to take any part in the political government of the Union. . .

"Globe,"
May 4, 1864,
p. 2107.

This seemed to Congress too trenchant a solution of a Constitutional knot which was puzzling the best minds of the commonwealth, and the preamble was rejected; but the spirit of it breathed in every section of the bill. Mr. Davis's design was to put a stop to the work which the President had already begun in Tennessee and Louisiana, and to prevent the extension of that policy to other Southern States. The bill authorized the

CHAP. V. appointment of a provisional governor in each of the States in rebellion, and provided that, after the military resistance to the United States should have been suppressed and the people sufficiently returned to their obedience to the Constitution and laws, the white male citizens of the State should be enrolled; and when a majority of them should have taken the oath of allegiance, the loyal people of the State should be entitled to elect delegates to a convention to reestablish a State government. The convention was required to insert in the constitution three provisions: First, to prevent prominent civil or military officers of the Confederates to vote for or to be members of the legislature or governor; second, that involuntary servitude is forever prohibited, and the freedom of all persons guaranteed in said States; third, no debt, State or Confederate, created by or under the sanction of the usurping power, shall be recognized or paid by the State. Upon the adoption of the constitution by the convention, and its ratification by the electors of the State, the provisional government shall so certify to the President, who, after obtaining the assent of Congress, shall by proclamation recognize the government so established, and none other, as the constitutional government of the State; and from the date of such recognition, and not before, Congressmen and Presidential electors may be elected in such State. Pending the reorganization, the provisional governor shall enforce the laws of the Union, and of the State before rebellion. Another section of the bill emancipated all slaves in those States, with their posterity, and made it the duty of the United States courts to

discharge them on habeas corpus if restrained of their liberty on pretense of any claim to service or labor as slaves, and to inflict a penalty of fine or imprisonment upon the persons claiming them. Another section declared any person hereafter holding any important office, civil or military, in the rebel service not to be a citizen of the United States.

This bill was supported by Mr. Davis in a speech of extraordinary energy. Without hesitation he declared it a test and standard of antislavery orthodoxy; he asserted boldly that Congress, and Congress alone, had the power to revive the reign of law in all that territory which, through rebellion, had put itself outside of the law. "Until therefore," he said, "Congress recognize a State government organized under its auspices, there is no government in the rebel States except the authority of Congress. . . The duty is imposed on Congress . . . to administer civil government until the people shall, under its guidance, submit to the Constitution of the United States, and under the laws which it shall impose, and on the conditions Congress may require, reorganize a republican government for themselves, and Congress shall recognize that government." He declared there was no indication which came from the South, "from the darkness of that bottomless pit," that there was a willingness to accept any terms that even the Democrats were willing to offer; he believed that no beginning of legal and orderly government could be made till military opposition was absolutely annihilated; that there were only three ways of bringing about a reorganization of civil governments. One was to remove

CHAP. V. the cause of the war by an amendment to the Constitution of the United States, prohibiting slavery everywhere within its limits: that, he said, "goes to the root of the matter, and should consecrate the nation's triumph"; but this measure he thought involved infinite difficulty and delay. Though it met his hearty approval, it was not a remedy for the evils to be dealt with. The next plan he considered was that of the President's amnesty proclamation. This he denounced as utterly lacking in all the guarantees required: "If, in any manner," he said, "by the toleration of martial law, lately proclaimed the fundamental law, under the dictation of any military authority, or under the prescriptions of a provost marshal, something in the form of a government shall be presented, represented to rest on the votes of one-tenth of the population, the President will recognize that, provided it does not contravene the proclamation of freedom and the laws of Congress."

Of
Dec. 8, 1863.

Having dismissed both of these plans with brief censure, he then made a powerful plea for the bill he had reported. He called upon Congress to take the responsibility of saying, "In the face of those who clamor for speedy recognition of governments tolerating slavery, that the safety of the people of the United States is the supreme law; that their will is the supreme rule of law, and that we are authorized to pronounce their will on this subject; take the responsibility to say that we will revise the judgments of our ancestors; that we have experience written in blood which they had not; that we find now, what they darkly doubted, that slavery is really, radically inconsistent with the

permanence of republican governments, and that being charged by the supreme law of the land on our conscience and judgment to guaranty, that is, to continue, maintain, and enforce, if it exist, to institute and restore when overthrown, republican governments throughout the broad limits of the republic, we will weed out every element of their policy which we think incompatible with its permanence and endurance."

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Appendix,
"Globe,"
Mar. 22,
1864,
pp. 83-85.

The bill was extensively debated. It was not opposed to any extent by the Republicans of the House; the Democrats were left to make a purely partisan opposition to it. The President declined to exercise any influence on the debate, and the bill was passed by a vote of seventy-four to fifty-nine. It was called up in the Senate by B. F. Wade of Ohio, who, in supporting it, followed very much the same line of argument as that adopted by Mr. Davis in the House. B. Gratz Brown of Missouri, believing that as the session was drawing near its close there was no time to discuss a measure of such transcendent importance, offered an amendment simply forbidding any State in insurrection to cast votes for electors of President or Vice-President of the United States, or to elect Members of Congress until the insurrection in such State was suppressed or abandoned, and its inhabitants had returned to their obedience to the Government of the United States, such returning to obedience being declared by proclamation of the President, issued by virtue of an act of Congress thereafter to be passed authorizing the same. The amendment of Mr. Brown was adopted by a bare majority, seventeen voting in favor of it and six-

July 1, 1864.

"Globe,"
July 1, 1864,
p. 3460.

CHAP. V. teen against it. Mr. Sumner tried to have the Proclamation of Emancipation adopted and enacted as a statute of the United States, but this proposition was lost by a considerable majority. The House declined to concur in the amendment of the Senate and asked for a committee of conference, in which the Senate receded from its amendment and the bill went to the President for his approval in the closing moments of the session.

1864. Congress was to adjourn at noon on the Fourth of July; the President was in his room at the Capitol signing bills, which were laid before him as they were brought from the two Houses. When this important bill was placed before him he laid it aside and went on with the other work of the moment. Several prominent members entered in a state of intense anxiety over the fate of the bill. Mr. Sumner and Mr. Boutwell, while their nervousness was evident, refrained from any comment. Zachariah Chandler, who was unabashed in any mortal presence, roundly asked the President if he intended to sign the bill. The President replied: "This bill has been placed before me a few moments before Congress adjourns. It is a matter of too much importance to be swallowed in that way." "If it is vetoed," cried Mr. Chandler, "it will damage us fearfully in the Northwest. The important point is that one prohibiting slavery in the reconstructed States." Mr. Lincoln said: "That is the point on which I doubt the authority of Congress to act." "It is no more than you have done yourself," said the Senator. The President answered: "I conceive that I may in an emergency do things on military grounds which cannot be done constitutionally by Congress."

J. H.,
Diary.

Mr. Chandler, expressing his deep chagrin, went out, and the President, addressing the members of the Cabinet who were seated with him, said: "I do not see how any of us now can deny and contradict what we have always said, that Congress has no constitutional power over slavery in the States." Mr. Fessenden expressed his entire agreement with this view. "I have even had my doubts," he said, "as to the constitutional efficacy of your own decree of emancipation, in those cases where it has not been carried into effect by the actual advance of the army."

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1864.

J. H.,
Diary.

The President said: "This bill and the position of these gentlemen seem to me, in asserting that the insurrectionary States are no longer in the Union, to make the fatal admission that States, whenever they please, may of their own motion dissolve their connection with the Union. Now we cannot survive that admission, I am convinced. If that be true, I am not President; these gentlemen are not Congress. I have laboriously endeavored to avoid that question ever since it first began to be mooted, and thus to avoid confusion and disturbance in our own councils. It was to obviate this question that I earnestly favored the movement for an amendment to the Constitution abolishing slavery, which passed the Senate and failed in the House. I thought it much better, if it were possible, to restore the Union without the necessity of a violent quarrel among its friends as to whether certain States have been in or out of the Union during the war — a merely metaphysical question, and one unnecessary to be forced into discussion."

Ibid.

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July 4, 1864.

Although every member of the Cabinet agreed with the President, when, a few minutes later, he entered his carriage to go home, he foresaw the importance of the step he had resolved to take and its possibly disastrous consequences to himself. When some one said to him that the threats made by the extreme Radicals had no foundation, and that people would not bolt their ticket on a question of metaphysics, he answered: "If they choose to make a point upon this, I do not doubt that they can do harm. They have never been friendly to me. At all events, I must keep some consciousness of being somewhere near right. I must keep some standard or principle fixed within myself."

J. H.,
Diary.

After the fullest deliberation the President remained by his first impression that the bill was too rigid and too restrictive in its provisions to accomplish the work desired. He had all his life hated formulas in government, and he believed that the will of an intelligent people, acting freely under democratic institutions, could best give shape to the special machinery under which it was to be governed; and, in the wide variety of circumstances and conditions prevailing throughout the South, he held it unwise for either Congress or himself to prescribe any fixed and formal method by which the several States should resume their practical legal relations with the Union. Thinking in this way, and feeling himself unable to accept the bill of Congress as the last word of reconstruction, and yet unwilling to reject whatever of practical good might be accomplished by it, he resolved, a few days after Congress had adjourned, to remit the matter to the people themselves, and to allow them their choice

of all the methods proposed of returning to their allegiance. He issued, on the 8th of July, a proclamation giving a copy of the bill of Congress, reciting the circumstances under which it was passed, and going on to say:

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Now, therefore, I, Abraham Lincoln, President of the United States, do proclaim, declare, and make known that while I am—as I was in December last, when by proclamation I propounded a plan of restoration—unprepared by a formal approval of this bill to be inflexibly committed to any single plan of restoration, and while I am also unprepared to declare that the free State constitutions and governments, already adopted and installed in Arkansas and Louisiana, shall be set aside and held for naught, thereby repelling and discouraging the loyal citizens who have set up the same as to further effort, or to declare a constitutional competency in Congress to abolish slavery in States, but am at the same time sincerely hoping and expecting that a constitutional amendment abolishing slavery throughout the nation may be adopted, nevertheless, I am fully satisfied with the system for restoration contained in the bill as one very proper plan for the loyal people of any State choosing to adopt it; and that I am, and at all times shall be, prepared to give the executive aid and assistance to any such people, so soon as military resistance to the United States shall have been suppressed in any such State, and the people thereof shall have sufficiently returned to their obedience to the Constitution and the laws of the United States, in which cases military governors will be appointed, with directions to proceed according to the bill.

Lincoln,
Proclamation,
July 8, 1864.

The refusal of the President to sign the reconstruction bill caused a great effervescence at the adjournment of Congress. Mr. Chase, who had resigned from the Cabinet, made this entry in his diary: "The President pocketed the great bill providing for the reorganization of the rebel States as loyal States. He did not venture to veto, and

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Warden,
"Life of
Salmon P.
Chase,"
p. 623.

so put it in his pocket. It was a condemnation of his amnesty proclamation and of his general policy of reconstruction, rejecting the idea of possible reconstruction with slavery, which neither the President nor his chief advisers have, in my opinion, abandoned."

This entry, made by Mr. Chase in the bitterness of his anger, places the basest construction upon the President's action; but this sentiment was shared by not a few of those who claimed the title of extreme Radicals in Congress. Two days later the ex-Secretary gleefully reported, on the authority of Senator Pomeroy, that there was great dissatisfaction with Mr. Lincoln, which had been much exasperated by the pocketing of the reconstruction bill.

1864.

When Mr. Lincoln, disregarding precedents, and acting on his lifelong rule of taking the people into his confidence, issued his proclamation of the 8th of July, it was received by each division of the loyal people of the country as might have been expected. The great mass of Republican voters, who cared little for the metaphysics of the case, accepted his proclamation, as they had accepted that issued six months before, as the wisest and most practicable method of handling the question; but among those already hostile to the President, and those whose devotion to the cause of freedom was so ardent as to make them look upon him as lukewarm, the exasperation which was already excited increased. The indignation of Mr. Davis and Mr. Wade at seeing their work of the last session thus brought to nothing could not be restrained. Mr. Davis prepared, and both of them signed and

published, in the "New York Tribune," on the 5th of August, a manifesto, the most vigorous in attack that was ever directed against the President from his own party during his term.

The grim beginning of this document, which is addressed "To the Supporters of the Government," is in these terms: "We have read without surprise, but not without indignation, the proclamation of the President of the 8th of July, 1864. The supporters of the Administration are responsible to the country for its conduct; and it is their right and duty to check the encroachments of the Executive on the authority of Congress, and to require it to confine itself to its proper sphere." The paper went on to narrate the history of the reconstruction bill, and to claim that its treatment indicated a persistent though unavowed purpose of the President to defeat the will of the people by the Executive perversion of the Constitution. They insinuated that only the lowest personal motives could have dictated this action: "The President," they said, "by preventing this bill from becoming a law, holds the electoral votes of the rebel States at the dictation of his personal ambition. . . If electors for President be allowed to be chosen in either of those States, a sinister light will be cast on the motives which induced the President to 'hold for naught' the will of Congress rather than his government in Louisiana and Arkansas."

They ridiculed the President's earnestly expressed hope that the constitutional amendment abolishing slavery might be adopted: "We curiously inquire on what his expectation rests, after the vote of the House of Representatives at the

CHAP. V. recent session and in the face of the political complexion of more than enough of the States to prevent the possibility of its adoption within any reasonable time; and why he did not indulge his sincere hopes with so large an installment of the blessing as his approval of the bill would have secured?"

When we consider that only a few months elapsed before this beneficent amendment was adopted, we can form some idea of the comparative political sagacity of Mr. Lincoln and his critics. The fact that the President gave the bill of Congress his approval as a very proper plan for the loyal people of any States choosing to adopt it seemed to infuriate the authors of the bill: they said, "A more studied outrage on the legislative authority of the people has never been perpetrated." At the close of a long review of the President's proclamation, in which every sentence came in for its share of censure or of ridicule, this manifesto concluded:

"Such are the fruits of this rash and fatal act of the President—a blow at the friends of his Administration, at the rights of humanity, and at the principles of republican government. The President has greatly presumed on the forbearance which the supporters of his Administration have so long practiced, in view of the arduous conflict in which we are engaged, and the reckless ferocity of our political opponents. But he must understand that our support is of a cause and not of a man; that the authority of Congress is paramount and must be respected; that the whole body of the Union men of Congress will not submit to be impeached by him of rash and unconstitutional legis-

lation; and if he wishes our support he must confine himself to his executive duties — to obey and to execute, not make the laws — to suppress by arms armed rebellion, and leave political reorganization to Congress. If the supporters of the Government fail to insist on this they become responsible for the usurpations which they fail to rebuke, and are justly liable to the indignation of the people whose rights and security, committed to their keeping, they sacrifice. Let them consider the remedy of these usurpations, and, having found it, fearlessly execute it.”

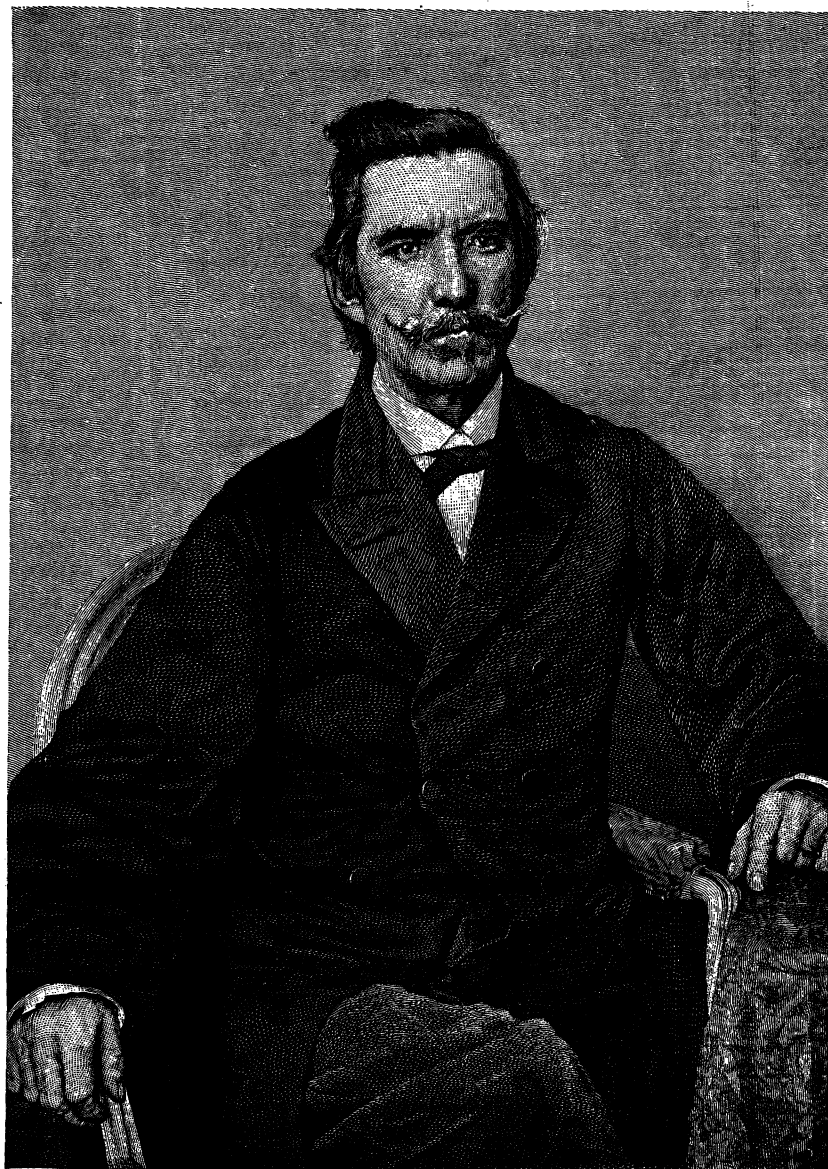
CHAPTER VI

THE LAST DAYS OF THE REBEL NAVY

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WE have seen how through the incessant efforts of Mr. Seward and Mr. Adams the Government of Great Britain had been brought to the point of prohibiting the building and the fitting out of Confederate ships of war in British ports; and also how Napoleon III. had been convinced by Gettysburg and Vicksburg that a brusque treachery was more expedient than the fulfilment of his promises to Mr. Slidell. Most of the rebel rams and ironclads built in Confederate waters had come to miserable ends before reaching the open seas. The power of the rebel navy was therefore strictly circumscribed in the latter years of the war, and the few cruisers which were left afloat could do nothing more than destroy an occasional vessel in distant waters. Although using no weapon but the torch they were still able to inflict considerable damage upon unarmed and peaceful commerce; but after a few months passed in alternate arson and evasion they all finished their careers in ways more or less ignoble.

In the spring and summer of 1863 the cruiser *Florida*, under the command of Captain J. N. Maffitt, burned a large number of small trading vessels on



REAR-ADMIRAL RAPHAEL SEMMES.



the American coast,¹ and one of her tenders entered, in June, the harbor of Portland, Maine, and destroyed a United States revenue cutter lying there. She then crossed the Atlantic and took refuge in the harbor of Brest. She remained there all the autumn, repairing and refitting in a government dock. A large portion of her crew left her at that port, and the work of filling their places with British sailors was slow and tedious.² The autumn and a part of the winter passed in this way, and it was late in February before the *Florida*, now under command of Lieutenant C. M. Morris, began another cruise in the West Indies and on the American coast. She made few depredations, however, during the summer, and on the 4th of October anchored in the harbor of Bahia in Brazil. The thorough refitting she had received in the French port, the light work she had done during the summer, had left her in nearly perfect condition. "Officers and crew," says Bulloch, "were in fine spirits, and hoped to accomplish a good deal of work still."

1864.

Bulloch,
"Secret
Service
of the Con-
federate
States in
Europe."
Vol. I.,
p. 185.

But when at twilight on the 4th of October she entered the Brazilian harbor, the trap was sprung and the sea rover had finished her career. At the dawn of the next day the United States steam corvette *Wachusett*, commanded by Napoleon Collins, was discovered at anchor not far off. Captain Morris went on shore, where he was received with

¹James D. Bulloch in his work "Secret Service of the Confederate States in Europe," Vol. I., p. 178, says: "The whole number of prizes taken during Maffitt's cruise was fifty-five."

²"The *Florida* wanted English-speaking seamen, and these had

to be sought for chiefly across the Channel. The men were engaged in small groups wherever they could be found, and were forwarded to Calais and other French channel ports, and then taken by rail to Brest."—Bulloch, Vol. I., p. 182.

CHAP. VI. special kindness by the president of the province ; the Brazilian admiral, on duty at Bahia, being also present at the interview. The Confederate cruiser was granted a stay of forty-eight hours for some trifling repairs he said were necessary, and it was intimated to him that an extension, if it was wanted, would not be refused. To put him still more at his ease, the admiral suggested that he should anchor the *Florida* between his flagship and the shore, which Morris at once did ; and feeling now perfectly secure, he permitted one half of his crew

Oct. 6, 1864. to go on shore and the next day, the liberty men having returned, the other half with Captain Morris and some of his officers took their turn to visit the town. He had received during the day, in an irregular manner, a challenge from the *Wachusett*, conveyed through the United States consulate, with the understanding that in case it was accepted the consul would use his influence to facilitate whatever repairs were needed on the *Florida*. Captain Morris declined this eccentric defiance, saying that he came to Bahia on his own business, and should leave when he liked ; that if he should happen to meet the *Wachusett* outside of the port he would fight her. But he had no thought of impending conflict in his mind when, after amusing himself during the evening in town, he went to bed. His slumbers were broken before daylight by the landlord of the hotel where he lodged, who told him that firing and cheering had been heard from the direction of the *Florida*.

As soon as the *Florida* had anchored in the port Thomas F. Wilson, Consul of the United States at Bahia, sent a protest to the President of the province

against the admission of that vessel to free practice, and also claimed that she should be detained for having, "in combination with the pirate *Alabama*, violated the sovereignty of the Imperial Government of Brazil by capturing and destroying vessels belonging to citizens of the United States of America within the territorial waters of Brazil, near the island of Fernando de Noronha, in April, 1863." This demand having been refused by the President on the same day, the consul reported the action of the authorities to Commander Collins, who at once resolved to take the matter into his own hands. In his report to the Secretary of the Navy he says that he "thought it probable the Brazilian authorities would forbear to interfere, as they had done at Fernando de Noronha, when the rebel steamer *Alabama* was permitted to take into the anchorage three American ships, and to take coal from the *Louisa Hatch* within musket shot of the fort, and afterward, within easy range of their guns, to set on fire those unarmed vessels."¹ It cannot be doubted that Commander Collins thought this was the course which the Brazilian Government in justice and impartiality should have pursued; but it can hardly be believed that he had full confidence in their abstention. It is clear that the consul felt that he would be safer beyond Brazilian jurisdiction after

¹ Semmes, in his "Adventures Afloat," denies that he burned these vessels within the marine league. He says he took "pains to send them both beyond the marine league, that he might pay due respect to the jurisdiction of Brazil." It is stated in the "Cruise of the *Alabama* and *Sum-*

ter," p. 179, of the *Louisa Hatch* and *Kate Cory*, that "when about five miles from land both vessels were set fire to."

On the next page the statement is made from Captain Semmes's diary that he sent the vessels "a league outside the island and burned them."

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1864. At three o'clock on the morning of the 7th of October the *Wachusett* slipped her cable and steered for the *Florida*, a little more than half a mile away. Collins's intention was to sink the corsair on the spot; but unforeseen circumstances prevented him from striking her as he intended. He struck her instead on the starboard quarter, cutting down her bulwarks and carrying away her mizenmast and breaking her mainyard, with no injury whatever to the *Wachusett*. She then backed off, believing the *Florida* would sink from the effects of the blow. A few pistol shots, fired by the Confederates, were answered by a volley of small arms from the *Wachusett*, and, in the excitement of the moment, two broadside guns were fired from the national vessel contrary to Collins's orders, when the Confederate lieutenant, J. K. Porter, finding further resistance impossible, came on board the *Wachusett* and surrendered. A hawser was at once attached to the *Florida*, and the *Wachusett*, with her prize, moved out to sea.

The Brazilian naval commander had seen, in the dim light of the morning, the *Wachusett* approaching the *Florida*, and had sent an officer to warn her off. This intimation was received after the collision, and the humorously evasive answer of the American was that he would do nothing further. A short while afterwards the United States vessel was seen apparently returning to her berth, but to the surprise of the Brazilian the *Florida* seemed to be following her, and it was soon discovered that

she was in tow. The Brazilian fired three guns at the *Wachusett*, none of which struck, and as soon as steam could be made Commander Macebo started in pursuit; but the stern chase was hopeless from the first, and by noon the American vessels had disappeared below the Northern horizon, and the Brazilian returned to draw up the report which should form the basis of the diplomatic demand which the Imperial Government at once made on that of the United States. Collins arrived with his prize at Hampton Roads on the 12th of November, where, on the 28th, she foundered while lying at anchor. So seasonable a disaster of course gave rise to rumors of collusion, for which there seems to have been no just foundation. A naval and a military court of inquiry were held, from which it appeared that the sinking of the *Florida* was accidental.

The Government of Brazil protested with great energy against the act of Commander Collins and promptly demanded reparation, which was readily granted by the President. "Jealousy of foreign intervention in every form," said Mr. Seward, in his reply to the Brazilian minister, "and absolute non-intervention in the domestic affairs of foreign nations, are cardinal principles in the policy of the United States. You have, therefore, justly expected that the President would disavow and regret the proceedings at Bahia. He will suspend Captain Collins, and direct him to appear before a court martial. The consul at Bahia admits that he advised and incited the captain, and was active in the proceedings; he will therefore be dismissed. The flag of Brazil will receive from the United

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Com-
mander
Macebo,
Report.
Oct. 7, 1864.

1864.

Seward to
Barboza da
Silva,
Dec. 26.

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1864.

States navy the honors customary in the intercourse of friendly maritime powers." Having thus done justice to the international law which had been violated by Captain Collins, the Secretary administered a severe rebuke to the Government of Brazil for its ascribing the character of a lawful naval belligerent to insurgent citizens of the United States. He claimed that the *Florida* like the *Alabama* was a pirate belonging to no nation or lawful belligerent, and therefore that the harboring of these piratical ships in Brazilian ports was a wrong and injury for which Brazil justly owed reparation to the United States as ample as the reparation which she now received from them. "These positions of this Government," said the Secretary, "are no longer deemed open to argument. It does not, however, belong to the captains of ships-of-war of the United States, or to the commanders of their armies, or to their consuls residing in foreign ports, acting without the authority of Congress, and without even Executive direction, and choosing their own time, manner, and occasion, to assert the rights and redress the wrongs of the country. This power can be lawfully exercised only by the Government of the United States." He therefore equally condemned the conduct of the American and the Brazilian officers in the port of Bahia. "Subordinate agents," he said, "without the knowledge of their respective Governments, mutually inaugurated an unauthorized, irregular, and unlawful war. In desisting from that war on her part, and in appealing to this Government for redress, Brazil rightly appreciated the character of the United States and set an example worthy of emulation."

The officers of the *Florida* were released and soon afterwards sailed for England. The act of Collins was one of many instances where brave and patriotic naval officers have, in defiance of international law, committed acts of aggression on the territory of neutral powers. Seeing an important end to be accomplished he took the responsibility of violating neutral territory and of facing whatever punishment might result from his act. His conduct was not unlike that of Nelson when he attacked the Danish fleet at Copenhagen; of Captain Hellyar when he cut out the *Essex* under the guns of the Chilian battery at Valparaiso, and of Captain Daniel Turner when he chased the *Federal* into the Harbor of St. Bartholomew and captured her at the very mouth of the Swedish cannon.¹ An attempt has been made by Confederate writers to show that the exploit of Collins in the harbor of Bahia differed from those we have mentioned in the fact that the Consul of the United States had promised the President of the Province that no act of aggression should be committed by the *Wachusett*, but there is no claim that Collins participated in this promise, and he was under no honorable obligation to regard it. He broke the law and took his punishment with equal bravery and fortitude.

When, in the early part of the year 1864, the Emperor of France suddenly changed his mind in regard to the building of Confederate ironclads in France, and ordered the astonished M. Arman to sell them to some other power, the Government of Denmark, which was then in trouble with Prussia,

¹ Captain J. D. Bulloch (Vol. I., pp. 190, 191) with perfect fairness cites these very instances in the case of the *Florida*.

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Bulloch
to Mallory,
June 10,
1864.
"Secret
Service of
the Confed-
erate States
in Europe."
Vol. II.,
p. 46.

acquired one of the rams which Captain Bulloch had originally ordered. "There was at the same time," says Captain Bulloch, "an express understanding between M. Arman and me that the sale of the corvettes should be purely fictitious and that the negotiations in respect to the rams should be kept in such a state that we might get possession of them again if there should be any change in the policy of the Emperor's Government before their completion." The ship was sold to Denmark and was sent to Copenhagen under the French flag, with a French crew. Captain Bulloch, however, still remained in communication with M. Arman, watching for an opportunity to repossess himself of the *Sphinx*, as the ram had been named. There had been great delay in the completion and delivery of the vessel. Denmark had been defeated by Prussia in the Schleswig-Holstein controversy, and the *Sphinx* had not been made ready in time to take part in the war. M. Arman, learning that the Danish Government was willing to part with its bargain, prolonged the negotiations until Captain Bulloch could collect a staff of officers, a crew, and sufficient stores; and the year 1865 had begun before all was in readiness. The sale was effected, and the *Stonewall*, as the ram was rechristened, sailed from Copenhagen on the 6th of January. A tender was purchased and fitted out and the two vessels met at the Bay of Quiberon, Belle Isle, on the 24th, where the ram took on her crew and her stores and sailed for Ferrol. All the labor and expense which had been bestowed upon her was to be without avail. She lay in the harbor of Ferrol until the 24th of March, and then, evading the *Niagara* and

1865.

Sacramento, which indeed showed no eagerness to attack her, she made her way to Lisbon; thence striking westward she arrived at Havana early in May. Learning that Lee had surrendered and Jefferson Davis was captured, her commander gave up the *Stonewall* to the Captain-General of Cuba, receiving sixteen thousand dollars in money to pay off his crew. The Spanish Government handed her over to the United States, receiving the money the Captain-General had disbursed, and shortly afterwards the *Stonewall* again changed her name and her flag and became the property of the Emperor of Japan.

Commander M. F. Maury, better known as a man of science than as a naval warrior, had been sent to England towards the close of the year 1862 for special service, and very much was expected of him by the Richmond Government, which probably exaggerated his influence with the ruling classes of that country. His special duty was the investigation of the subject of submarine defenses, and the manufacture and use of explosives. He had also authority to buy and equip a cruiser if he thought it practicable, and under this authority he purchased an iron-clad, Clyde-built screw steamer, called the *Japan*, and put his cousin W. L. Maury on board as commander, changing the name of the ship to the *Georgia*. His enlistment of her crew gave rise to a prosecution against two persons named Jones and Highatt for a violation of the foreign enlistment act; a jury at the Liverpool assizes found them both guilty and they were fined £50 each. The *Georgia* cruised for several months in 1863, destroying six or seven American vessels; but be-

Bulloch,
"Secret
Service of
the Confed-
erate States
in Europe."
Vol. II.,
pp. 261-263.

CHAP. VI. ing ill handled and ill managed, she came back to Europe for repairs and went into the Government dock at Cherbourg, where she remained four months. In March, 1864, she went out again, but soon afterwards put in at Bordeaux, whence, in despair of accomplishing anything more with her, she was dispatched to Liverpool and sold to a merchant of that city. Her war fittings were removed and, with a British register and flying the British flag, under charter to the Portuguese Government she sailed in August from Liverpool for Lisbon. But her peaceful appearance and her honest intentions could not save her. She was captured by the *Niagara* off the mouth of the Tagus, and condemned and sold in a United States prize court.

Bulloch,
"Secret
Service of
the Confed-
erate States
in Europe."
Vol. II.,
p. 264.

Another of Commodore Maury's purchases came to no better fate. He bought at Sheerness, in November, 1863, a dispatch boat called the *Victor*, but before she had been made ready for a cruise, Maury took alarm and hurried her across the Channel to Calais. A staff of Confederate naval officers boarded her in the transit; she went through the ceremony of being commissioned as a ship-of-war, and entered the harbor of Calais under the name and style of the Confederate ship *Rappahannock*. Mr. Dayton remonstrated strongly against her being received, but the French Government insisted that she could not be refused asylum as she had entered the port in distress. Although his protests were not sufficient to keep her out, they were of sufficient force to keep her in, and after her repairs were completed Mr. Slidell exhausted all his powers of argument and persuasion in the fruitless attempt to induce the Government of the

Emperor to allow her to depart. She lay at Calais enjoying the fatal hospitality of France until the war ended and the United States Government took possession of her. The dispatches of Mr. Slidell to the Government in Richmond, in regard to this matter, form a most amazing chapter of the diplomatic history of the Rebellion. The Emperor acted, not only towards Mr. Slidell but towards his own ministers, with almost inconceivable duplicity.

We shall hereafter show how disastrous an effect the controversy over the *Rappahannock* exercised on the fortunes of the *Alabama*, and after that famous cruiser had been sent to the bottom of the Channel by the guns of the *Kearsarge*, the Emperor still continued the most astounding mystifications and falsehoods to the American minister, the Confederate commissioner, and his own Government. On the 11th of July Slidell wrote to Mr. Benjamin: "I called on the 1st inst. on Messrs. Morny and Persigny to invoke their good offices in the affair of the *Rappahannock*. I expressed very fully my opinion of the conduct of the Foreign Minister, in which they heartily concurred, and promised me, the former to speak and the latter to write to the Emperor on the subject. On the 7th I received from Mr. Persigny a note inclosing an autograph letter of the Emperor, of the same day, in these words:

1864.

MS. Confederate Archives.

"'MON CHER PERSIGNY: J'ai donné l'ordre pour que le *Rappahannock* puisse quitter les ports de France, mais il ne faut pas que le ministre Américain le sache. Croyez à ma sincère amitié.—NAPOLÉON.' In response to an inquiry made of my friend at the Foreign Affairs, he wrote to me on the 9th inst.:

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“Aucune décision n’a été prise au sujet du *Rappahannock*. M. D. de l’H. me l’a dit et répété hier soir. En attendant le *Rappahannock* fera bien de prendre des précautions pour ne pas être pincé par un des croiseurs fédéraux qui le surveillent.’

“This caution,” says Mr. Slidell, “was rather inconsistent with the declaration that no decision had been made; but supposing it possible that the order might have been given to the Minister of Marine, I called on him immediately to ascertain the fact, and showed him the Emperor’s letter, saying that as the Minister of Foreign Affairs said that no decision had been made on the subject of the *Rappahannock* I presumed that the order had been communicated directly to him. He assured me that such was not the case, and was evidently surprised at the discrepancy between the Emperor’s letter and the declaration of his Foreign Minister.” The Emperor seems at this time to have carried on his Government in water-tight compartments. He gave separate directions in a different sense to each of his ministers. M. Drouyn de l’Huys was directed to give satisfactory assurances to Mr. Dayton; the Minister of Marine was authorized to be on the best possible terms with Mr. Slidell; Persigny and Mocquard, Napoleon’s nearest familiars, were frank and avowed Confederate sympathizers. Even the President of the Senate, presiding over the Committee of Jurisconsults, received orders from the Tuileries as to legal decisions which were to be rendered in the case of the *Rappahannock*, and the Emperor held himself perfectly free to repudiate anything said by either of these officers, or by himself, when occasion required it.

When at last Napoleon III. gave the peremptory order that the *Rappahannock* should be allowed to leave the ports of France, it was coupled with the condition that she should take away no larger crew than she had brought into Calais. This was a bitter disappointment to Mr. Slidell and his associates. The rebel envoy represented to the Imperial Government that if this point were insisted on the permission to go to sea was altogether illusory. The Minister of Marine expressed his deep regret at the stringency of the instructions under which he was acting, and which allowed him no discretion.¹ He volunteered to make an effort to induce his colleagues to relax the rigor of the conditions; but a few days later informed Mr. Slidell that after a full discussion in Cabinet Council, under the presidency of the Empress, it was decided not to change the instructions. Commodore Samuel Barron and Captain Bulloch then concluded that it was not worth while for the *Rappahannock* to attempt to go to sea with this insufficient number of men; the difficulty of getting a new crew from England; the presence of four Union cruisers in the neighborhood of Calais; the inability of the ship to carry more than five days' full supply of coal, were the discour-

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¹ The rebel commissioners could find no fault in the conduct of the Minister of Marine. In discussing the *Rappahannock* case with Mr. Slidell, he said "that in this case as well as in those of the *Florida* and *Georgia* he had done all he could to keep his eyes shut to any violation of neutrality, but that it could not be expected that when forcibly opened he should affect not to see. He ap-

pealed to me whether he had not afforded every possible facility for the landing, transit, and putting of seamen on board of our various ships. He said that he had given the order for the ship to proceed to sea by the first tide, because he knew that he would receive, the next day, from the Minister of Foreign Affairs a communication that would compel him to detain her."

Slidell to Benjamin, Mar. 5, 1864. MS., Confederate Archives.

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aging circumstances which induced the Confederate agents to leave the *Rappahannock* to her fate in the port of Calais. Mr. Slidell attributed his failure in this matter to the ill-will and bad faith of M. Drouyn de l'Huys. "Strange as it may seem," he says, "the fact is patent that Mr. Dayton has managed to convince him that the Lincoln Government is prepared to go to war with France, if not directly, at least by pursuing a course towards Mexico which would necessarily soon result in open hostilities. I still believe that the Emperor is decidedly our friend, but the Mexican question and his well-founded distrust of England will continue to prevent any favorable action on his part in which she will not fully participate."

Slidell to
Benjamin,
Aug. 1, 1864.
MS., Con-
federate
Archives.

The course of the Imperial Government in this matter caused deep indignation in Richmond. When Mr. Davis read Slidell's dispatch of May 2, 1864, in which he said that he had instructed Fauntleroy to strike his flag and abandon the *Rappahannock* in the port of Calais, the Confederate chief made this angry note in pencil for Mr. Benjamin: "Too much has been borne of evasion and indignity in relation to the *Rappahannock* — nothing was left but the course adopted."¹

MS., Con-
federate
Archives.

It was while the triangular controversy was going on between the American legation, the Imperial Government, and the Confederate emissaries in regard to the hospitality extended to the *Rappahannock* in the ports of France that Captain Semmes arrived with the *Alabama* in the harbor of Cherbourg with thirty-seven prisoners on board, cap-

¹ Mr. Davis also refers in the same note to "the devious and offensive course" of France in relation to tobacco.

tured from American merchant vessels. Mr. Dayton lost not a moment in laying a brief and menacing protest before the Minister of Foreign Affairs. He had said some time before, when protesting against the presence of the *Florida* and the *Georgia*, that it needed only the *Alabama* to make the French ports a rendezvous for the entire rebel navy, and M. Drouyn de l'Huys, irritated by the epigram, said hastily: "Monsieur, I will not permit that vessel to come in." It is not to be doubted that M. Drouyn de l'Huys would gladly have warned off this troublesome visitor, but there was so much of sympathy with the Confederate cause in the highest official circles that he was unable to effect this. The terms, however, on which the *Alabama* was admitted to the port were those of harsh and grudging welcome. The Minister of Marine wrote to the admiral-prefect at Cherbourg that the *Alabama* could not be permitted to enter into one of the basins of the arsenal, but might address itself to commercial accommodations for such urgent repairs as it needed; that it was not proper for one of the belligerents to be continually making use of the French ports as a base of operations. The admiral-prefect was further ordered to observe to the captain of the *Alabama* that he had not been forced to enter into Cherbourg by any accidents of the sea, and that he might just as well have gone somewhere else.

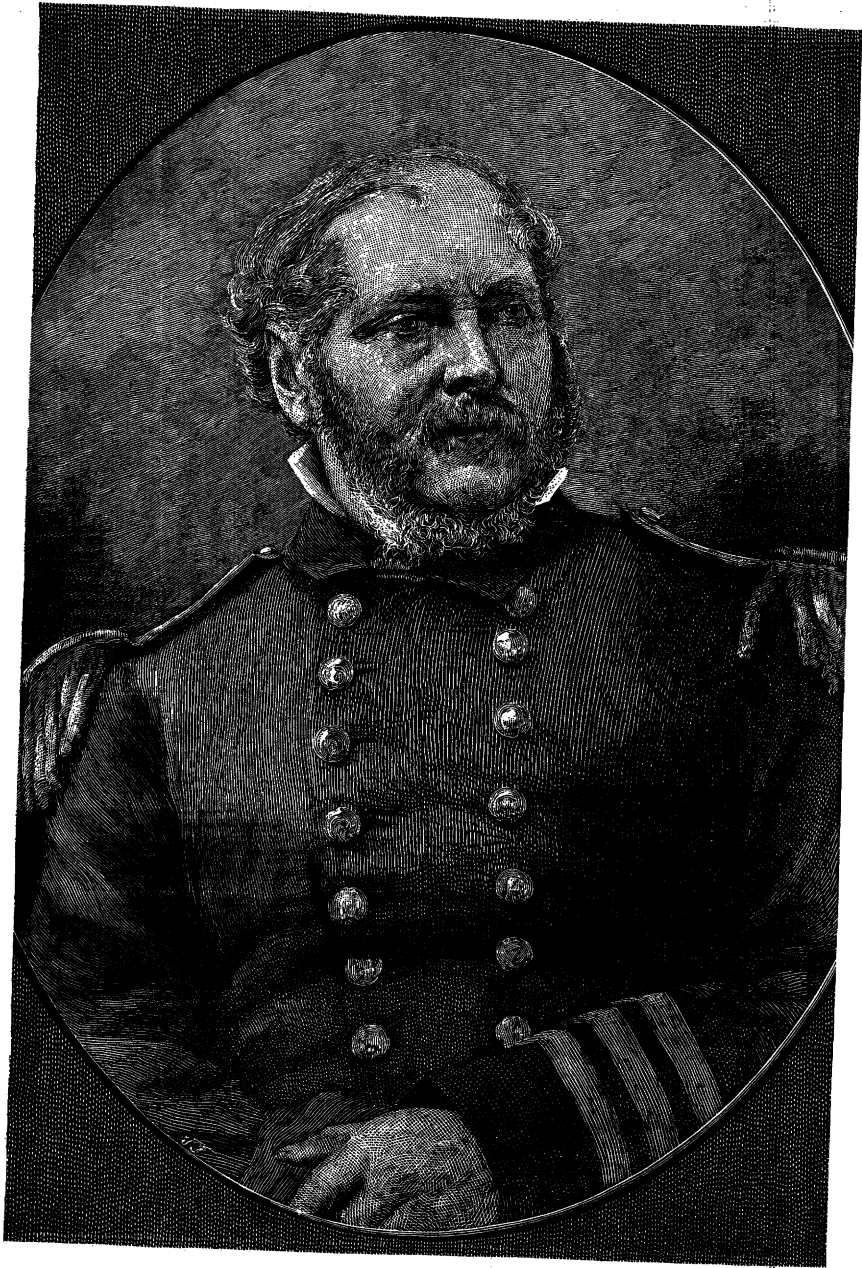
Dayton
to Seward,
June 18,
1864.

The moment the *Alabama* appeared Mr. Dayton had telegraphed to Captain John A. Winslow, who was at Flushing with the United States ship *Kearsarge*, who came with all haste to Cherbourg. He did not enter the port, as that would have

CHAP. VI. subjected him to detention, but he steamed by the breakwater from end to end without anchoring, an act accepted both by Semmes and the French officers in the port as a virtual challenge. It has suited Captain Semmes and other Confederate writers to represent his acceptance of this chivalrous defiance as a bit of heroic self-sacrifice in encountering an overwhelming superiority of force. This is clearly an afterthought; the two ships were not unequally matched; the *Alabama* was somewhat larger than the *Kearsarge* and carried one more gun; the *Kearsarge* was in better condition, with a crew superior in numbers and under far better discipline and training. It is only fair to Captain Semmes to say that he did not hesitate for a moment to accept the combat thus afforded him. He says in his diary of the 15th of June: "The two ships are so equally matched I do not feel at liberty to decline it." He sent notice to the United States consul, through M. Bonfils, the Confederate agent, that he would go out to engage the *Kearsarge* as soon as he could get ready. He at once ordered a load of coal on board, which was in itself a notification to the authorities of immediate departure.

1864.

M. Bonfils did not share in the confidence of the Confederate cruiser. His fear of the result of the coming fight so grew upon him that he sent on the 18th of June a letter full of panic to Mr. Slidell in Paris, imploring him to order Captain Semmes to desist from a contest which he felt would be fatal. Mr. Slidell answered on the morning of the 19th of June, just as he was starting to the races at Fontainebleau, declining to give any such ad-



CAPTAIN JOHN A. WINSLOW.

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vice to Captain Semmes. "I have the most entire confidence," he said, "in his judgment, his skill, and his cool courage. I believe he would not proceed to the encounter of the *Kearsarge* unless he thought he had a reasonable chance of capturing her." In reply to M. Bonfils's assurance that the *Alabama* would be welcome to the Government docks at Cherbourg, Mr. Slidell expressed his doubt as to whether any such permission would be granted. "I have recently," he said, "had sad occasion, in the case of the *Rappahannock*, detained without cause since the 17th February, to know how long an unfriendly minister may delay the decision of the plainest case."

Slidell to
Benjamin,
June 30,
1864.
MS., Con-
federate
Archives.

The French Government had been greatly embarrassed by the arrival of the *Alabama* at Cherbourg, and their embarrassment was not lessened by the promptness with which Captain Winslow came to the rendezvous. M. Drouyn de l'Huys in conversation with Mr. Dayton strongly objected to a sea-fight in the face of France and at a distance from the coast "within reach of the guns used on shipboard in these days." "The reason of the old rules," he said, "which assumed that three miles was the outermost reach of a cannon shot, no longer existed; and, in a word, a fight on or about such a distance from their coast would be offensive to the dignity of France, and they would not permit it." Mr. Dayton, of course, declined to accept such an off-hand modification of a rule of international law, but courteously said that he would prefer that the American ship should bring on a fight a little further off if no advantage were lost by it. He wrote, at the same time, to Captain Winslow, in-

CHAP. VI. forming him of the feeling of the French Government, telling him he had a perfect right to fight three miles off the coast, but that he had better choose his battleground six or seven miles away from France, if he lost nothing by it. Captain Winslow took upon himself to assure the admiral-prefect that no question should arise about the line of jurisdiction.

June, 1864.

Accordingly when on the morning of the 19th, the day being fine, the atmosphere hazy, and a gentle breeze blowing from the west, the *Alabama* was seen coming out of the western entrance at Cherbourg, accompanied by the French ironclad *Couronne*, which was charged with the keeping of peace within the marine league, Captain Winslow, determined that no controversy of jurisdiction should possibly arise, and also, that if he once laid his hands upon the *Alabama* she should not get again within neutral waters, steamed away to seaward, clearing for action as he ran, with the *Alabama* in pursuit, until the *Kearsarge* had attained a point seven miles from the French coast; he then turned short about and steered directly for the *Alabama*, his purpose being to run her down, or, if that were not practicable, to close in with her. But as soon as the *Kearsarge* came round, the *Alabama* sheered, presenting her starboard battery, and when the ships had come within about a mile of each other, she opened her full broadside and began firing rapidly. The shot did little damage to the *Kearsarge*; another and another broadside came thundering from the Confederate corsair, still without harm to the Union vessel except to the rigging. The *Kearsarge* was now within 900

Winslow,
Report,
July 30,
1864.
Report
Secretary
of the
Navy, 1864,
p. 630.

yards of her enemy and had not yet fired a shot, but her commander, apprehensive that another broadside, which would have raked her, might prove disastrous, sheered his vessel and opened on the *Alabama*. The vessels now lay broadside and broadside, and Winslow feared that Semmes might make for the shore; to defeat this he made up his mind to keep full speed on, to run under the stern of the *Alabama* and rake her. To avoid this Semmes kept sheering, and as a consequence the two vessels, with a full head of steam, fell into a circular track which continued during the whole engagement.

The duel thus begun, neither side could withdraw from it. Winslow, intent upon destroying his enemy, had no fear except that she should escape to French waters, and he held her so close that the two vessels in this deadly waltz drifted slowly westward in a three-knot current and Winslow was able to finish his work five miles from land. The firing of the *Alabama* was at first rapid and wild, though it improved towards the close of the action. On board the *Kearsarge* the firing was much more deliberate; the men had been ordered to point the heavy guns below the water line reserving the lighter ones to clear the deck at closer quarters. The time for this latter service, however, never arrived; the *Alabama* was defeated before grape could be used. The Confederate fired some two shots to one fired by the *Kearsarge*, but with very little effect. Only three persons were wounded on the national vessel, of whom one afterwards died, while nearly every shot from the guns of the *Kearsarge* told fearfully on the *Alabama*. Six times the vessels had circled around each

Winslow,
Report
in
Secretary
of the
Navy, 1864,
p. 631.

other, the *Alabama*, with all her noise and fury, doing little damage, while the steady fire of the *Kearsarge* was working havoc on the decks and hull of the Confederate. At last, on the seventh rotation, Semmes, perceiving the battle was lost, tried to take flight for the shore of France.¹ His port broadside was then presented to the *Kearsarge* with only two guns bearing. Winslow now saw that his enemy was at his mercy, and poured his shot into her, and in a few moments had the satisfaction of seeing a white flag displayed over her stern. The fire of his lighter guns, which he had been keeping for close quarters, was then reserved; but a few moments later he was astonished by a renewed discharge from the two guns on the port side of the *Alabama*. Winslow again opened fire and laid the *Kearsarge* across the *Alabama's* bows for raking, when he discovered the white flag was still flying and again reserved his fire. A moment later the *Alabama* lowered her boats and an officer came alongside the *Kearsarge*, informing Winslow that the ship was sinking. Twenty minutes later she went down by the stern — her batteries rushing aft weighing her down, her bows rising high out of the water.

The *Kearsarge* had suffered so little during the engagement that Captain Winslow was taken somewhat by surprise at the sudden and complete de-

¹ "For some few minutes I had hopes of being able to reach the French coast, for which purpose I gave the ship all steam and set such of the fore and aft sails as were available. The ship filled so rapidly, however, that before we had made much progress the fires were extinguished in the furnaces, and we were evidently on the point of sinking. I now hauled down my colors to prevent the further destruction of life, and dispatched a boat to inform the enemy of our condition."—Captain Semmes, Report, June 21, 1864; Report Secretary of the Navy, 1864-65, p. 646.

CHAP. VI. feat of his enemy. The *Alabama* had sunk before the *Kearsarge* was ready with her boats to rescue the Confederate crew. While Winslow was lowering his boats for this purpose he took notice of the English yacht *Deerhound*, which had steamed out from Cherbourg to watch the fight, and requested John Lancaster, her owner, to assist him in picking up the drowning men. The latter instantly availed himself of this request in a manner which amazed the commander of the *Kearsarge*; in ten minutes after the request was made he had Semmes and about 40 of his officers and men on board, and then instantly steamed away to the English shore. Some French pilot boats which had arrived upon the scene also took part in the work of rescue and carried their contingent to France, so that Winslow, on the *Kearsarge*, had but a scanty show of prisoners.

A bitter controversy arose in regard to this action of Mr. Lancaster, and his conduct was the subject of severe animadversion in the report of the Secretary of the Navy. Mr. Welles said, referring to Semmes, "The same dishonor marked his conduct on this occasion as during his whole ignoble career. Before leaving Cherbourg he deposited the chronometers and other trophies of his robberies on shore. When beaten and compelled to surrender, he threw overboard the sword that was no longer his own, and abusing the generous confidence of his brave antagonist he stole away in the English tender, whose owner proved himself, by his conduct, a fit companion for the dishonored and beaten corsair." It may be doubted, however, whether any man conscious of the acts which Semmes had com-

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June 19,
1864.

mitted would have neglected any means of escape to neutral ground. He could hardly have been expected to go voluntarily on board the *Kearsarge* and deliver his sword to Captain Winslow; and, although the conduct of Mr. Lancaster and his subsequent explanations of it showed clearly enough his warm and active sympathies with the Confederate cause, it must be admitted that Captain Winslow, by requesting him to assist in saving the Confederate crew from the waves was estopped from any further criticism of his conduct. Lancaster could not have been asked to assist Captain Winslow in the capture of prisoners of war. If Winslow had ordered him off under penalty of being sent to follow the *Alabama* to the bottom of the Channel, he would have been entirely within his right; but having with instinctive humanity authorized him to pick up the men who were struggling in the water he had no reason to complain that the yachtsman made off with them to Southampton.

When Mr. Lancaster arrived on English soil with Captain Semmes and his crew they were received with every demonstration of enthusiastic welcome, and in the clubs and public journals friendly to the Confederate cause an attempt was at once made to account for the result of the fight in a manner which should be equally honorable to Confederate valor and British shipbuilding. The simple truth that an American vessel, built in great haste in an American ship-yard, manned by American sailors, armed with American ordnance, in a fair duel lasting an hour, should have sent to the bottom a ship built with the utmost care in a British yard, manned by British sailors, and armed with the most approved

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June, 1864.

Report
Secretary
of the
Navy,
1864-65,
p. 657.

British guns, the two vessels being almost absolutely equal in tonnage, armament, and equipment, was intolerable and incredible. The *Kearsarge* was therefore represented as greatly superior in size and equipment, and, finally, the assertion of Captain Semmes that he owed his defeat to the Union vessel being armor-plated was eagerly seized upon as a solution of the mystery. A few days after the battle Captain Winslow, nettled at the fables current in regard to the affair, wrote a letter to the "Daily News," as blunt and sailor-like as his manner of fighting, setting forth the facts of the engagement, and explaining the iron plating in these words: "In the wake of the engines, on the outside, the *Kearsarge* had stopped up and down her sheet chains. These were stopped by marline to eye-bolts, which extended some twenty feet, and this was done by the hands of the *Kearsarge*; the whole was covered by light plank to prevent dirt collecting. It was for the purpose of protecting the engines when there was no coal in the upper part of the bunkers, as was the case when the action took place. The *Alabama* had her bunkers full, and was equally protected. The *Kearsarge* went into action with a crew of 162 officers and men. The *Alabama*, by report of the *Deerhound's* officers, had 150." Semmes, after the habit of beaten commanders, claimed that this simple expedient of Winslow's gave him the victory, and further asserted that if a shell, which he lodged in the stern post of the *Kearsarge*, had exploded, the result would have been different. It is idle to discuss these hypotheses; the facts are that no missile struck the chains on the *Kearsarge* which would have done any seri-

ous damage had the chains not been there, and the shot in the stern post was fired after the *Alabama* was hopelessly beaten.

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J. R. Soley,
"The
Blockade
and the
Cruisers,"
pp. 211, 212.

In France the news caused a great sensation. The Emperor heard it on the grand-stand at the Fontainebleau races, and Prince Murat at once bore the evil tidings to Mr. Slidell. "The Emperor," said the Prince, "was deeply grieved"; and when this friendly intermediary repeated to his Majesty Mr. Slidell's charge that the delay in granting the *Alabama* access to the military port had caused Captain Semmes to go outside to meet his fate, the Emperor said Mr. Slidell "was mistaken, as the permission had been granted." Mr. Slidell, however, cherished his grievance in spite of the Emperor's assurances, and returning to Paris demanded an audience of the Minister of Foreign Affairs. M. Drouyn de l'Huys met him with that courtesy which every one about the Emperor seems to have had orders to show to the Confederate emissaries, saying that "he and everybody connected with the Government were profoundly afflicted at the loss of the *Alabama*; . . . *qu'il ne faisait pas du sentiment*, but sincerely felt all that he expressed."

June, 1864.

Mr. Slidell refused to be cajoled. He said that candor compelled him to declare that the disaster of the *Alabama* lay at the door of the Minister of Foreign Affairs or the Minister of Marine; that if permission to enter the military port had been accorded, the point of honor which had induced Captain Semmes to encounter a superior foe would not have been raised. The Minister denied the fact alleged; but the well-informed Mr. Slidell quoted the instructions to the military prefect,

Slidell to
Benjamin,
June 30,
1864.
MS., Con-
federate
Archives.

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June, 1864.

which, as we have seen, amounted to an intimation that Captain Semmes's visit was unwelcome. Mr. Slidell continued that he was obliged to say he had observed for some months past a growing disposition to treat his Government with scant courtesy and that even the neutrality which the Emperor had proclaimed was not observed towards them — a line of observation which M. Drouyn de l'Huys at once checked, "with some appearance of temper," says Mr. Slidell. Before the interview ended Mr. Slidell asked the Minister, categorically, if the sentiments of the Emperor had for any cause become less friendly towards the Confederacy; that he was quite at a loss to imagine any such cause; but that in relation to the ships they had been induced to build by his suggestions, and for which they had expended large sums of money raised with great inconvenience and sacrifice, they had been treated with extreme harshness; and it was difficult to account for such a sudden change of policy if there were no corresponding change of feeling.

The Minister, "with a significant smile," declined to enter into this subject, but assured Mr. Slidell that the feeling of the Emperor was unchanged; he was, as he always had been, prepared to recognize the Confederacy, but he would not act alone. In reply to Mr. Slidell's inquiry whether the failure of Grant before Richmond would improve the chance of recognition, the Minister naturally answered in the affirmative, and dismissed the Southern envoy with suave regrets at the catastrophe of the *Alabama* and hopes of speedy good news from Virginia. At his next interview with

the Minister of Marine he was made happy by the statement that the catastrophe of the *Alabama* had produced "the most beneficial effect upon public opinion; that while they had lost some valuable lives and a ship that had proved capable of good service, they were compensated a hundredfold by the prestige which everywhere, but above all in France, attaches to chivalrous daring and the jealous observation of the point of honor, and that the material loss could not be weighed against the moral gain." When one is consoling a troublesome suitor, whose requests are denied beforehand, words cost little; and if M. de Chasseloup-Laubat thought it worth while to say that the Confederacy had gained anything by the loss of the *Alabama*, it cost no more to say it had gained "a hundredfold."

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Slidell to
Benjamin,
June 30,
1864. MS.,
Con-
federate
Archives.

The last place where the Confederate flag floated on sea or on shore was at the masthead of the *Shenandoah*. After the war had ended everywhere else, this inglorious vessel carried the torch of devastation among the poor and hardy sailors of New England in the Arctic seas. She was purchased by Captain Bulloch in September, 1864; sailed from Liverpool to Funchal, where she met her tender and took on her armaments and stores on the 20th of October. A large number of the men sent out in the tender refused to volunteer for service in the corsair, which caused the Confederate lieutenant, J. F. Ramsey, to report that he "never saw such a set of curs in all his experience at sea." Under the command of Captain J. I. Waddell, an old officer of the United States navy, the *Shenandoah* began her career in the Southern seas in the late

Bulloch,
"Secret
Service
of the Con-
federate
States
in Europe."
Vol. II.,
p. 143.

CHAP. VI.

autumn, and had destroyed eight vessels in the equatorial belt of the Atlantic by the time she arrived at Melbourne on the 25th of January, 1865. She was hospitably received at that port and remained there until late in February, when she set sail for the North. Her officers recount her exploits in Behring Sea with a pride which, under the circumstances, is unaccountable. They destroyed a great number of little whalers; they pilfered watches and chronometers and such small sums of money as they could find among the thrifty sailors,¹ lighting the icy seas with pitiful bonfires; and all this theft and wanton waste was perpetrated after Captain Waddell knew of Lee's surrender to Grant. He himself admitted in a published letter of the 27th of December, 1865, that he "captured, after reaching Behring Sea, the ship *William Thompson* and brig *Susan Abigail*. Both had left San Francisco in April. These captures were made about the 23d of June, and from each," he says, "I received San Francisco papers. These papers professed to have the correspondence between Generals Grant and Lee concerning the surrender of Lee's army." He pretends, however, that he believed the war would be kept up by President Davis, and he therefore, to use his own language, "continued my work until it was completed in the Arctic Ocean, on the 28th of June, 1865, when I

1865.

Hunt,
"The Shenandoah,"
pp. 206, 266,
267.

¹ In a book entitled "The Shenandoah," by C. E. Hunt, one of her officers, the writer describing a capture made on the 25th of June says: "This prize was the *General Williams* of New London, . . . and had more money on board than any vessel we captured

during the entire cruise. . . We did not make quite so good a haul as some of the old buccaneers used to when they fell in with a Spanish ship laden with specie; but we did secure out of that New Londoner the enormous sum of four hundred dollars" (p. 189).

had succeeded in destroying or dispersing the New England whaling fleet." He fell in with no other vessel after leaving Behring Sea until the 2d of August, when he spoke a British barque, fourteen days out from San Francisco, and received information of the capture of Jefferson Davis.

1865.

Waddell, beginning to realize his true position, set sail instinctively for the port from which he had departed. He tried to give his sea-rover the innocent appearance of a merchant vessel; he closed her ports, whitewashed her funnel, and strove to obliterate every external appearance of a war-like character. Like any other criminal running for his lair he avoided speaking to any vessel that he met and slunk by night, on the 6th of November, into the Mersey. The *Shenandoah* was at once placed under detention by the officers of the customs and soon afterwards handed over to the United States. Captain Freeman, who had been put in command of her, started for New York. A furious storm arose, and after fighting against head winds and wintry seas for several days she returned in a crippled condition to Liverpool. She was then put up for sale to the highest bidder, and bought for the Sultan of Zanzibar. His Majesty intending her for the dignified position of a royal yacht, she was fitted out and furnished in a luxurious manner; but the Sultan soon tired of his new favorite, after the fashion of sultans, and the yacht became once more a merchant vessel. After four years of peaceful commerce she met with an honorable death on a coral reef in the Indian Ocean.

1865.

CHAPTER VII

EARLY'S CAMPAIGN AGAINST WASHINGTON

CHAP. VII.

SOME of the most stirring scenes of the great Virginia campaign of 1864 took place in the Valley of the Shenandoah, and it was here that the first gleams of the final victory shone upon the Union arms. During the whole war this valley had been a vast covered way which sheltered the advance and retreat of every Confederate force that invaded the North or menaced Washington. The towering Blue Ridge guarded it on the east, the North Mountains, a portion of the great Alleghany chain, formed its western wall. Every movement of troops along its course was to the advantage of the Confederates; as it ran to the northeast, each step brought them nearer to the unguarded rear of Washington; when they chose to withdraw they drew the pursuing Union forces every moment farther away from their base. They did not lose their advantage even in crossing the Potomac; the Cumberland Valley of Maryland and Pennsylvania is merely a prolongation of that of the Shenandoah; the South Mountain continues the wall of the Blue Ridge, and under its protecting cover an invading force more than once carried devastation with fire and steel among the quiet rural hamlets of Pennsylvania.

Early in the campaign Grant felt the necessity of closing to the enemy this path of approach and of taking from them this fertile region from which they drew such plentiful stores of subsistence. But it continued throughout the summer to be the race-track of rushing armies, and autumn arrived before it was finally and forever wrenched from the weakened hands of the Rebellion. Our narrowing limits will not allow us to describe in detail the moving incidents of this crowded campaign; a bare outline of what was accomplished must suffice.

CHAP. VII.

1864.

We have already spoken of the failure of Sigel's movement in May and his defeat by Breckinridge at Newmarket, which in public opinion obscured the fair measure of success obtained by Crook in his victory at Cloyd's Mountain and the destruction of New River bridge. Grant and Halleck were equally dissatisfied with General Sigel, and the gallant veteran David Hunter was appointed in his stead. He moved southward with characteristic energy and speed; defeated and killed General W. E. Jones at Piedmont on the 5th of June; pushed rapidly on to Staunton and thence up to the fortifications of Lynchburg. This place, however, was of such vital importance to the Confederacy that General Lee had hurried heavy reinforcements forward, under Early, to protect it; and Hunter, whose supplies and ammunition were almost exhausted, found himself unable to carry the strong works by which it was surrounded or to fight the veteran army by which it was newly garrisoned. He therefore wisely resolved to retreat by way of the Kanawha, instead of the Shenandoah, which would have been extremely hazardous in view of

CHAP. VII. Early's strength. But this march took much time, and meanwhile the broad valley lay an open road before the Confederates, leading directly to Maryland and the rear of Washington.

Early,
"Memoir
of the
Last Year
of the
War,"
pp. 42, 51.

The temptation proved irresistible to General Lee. He felt himself unable to cope with Grant in the open field; he knew his best opportunities lay in those assaults upon his intrenchments with which Grant had of late so frequently gratified him. When, after his easy and most valuable victory at Cold Harbor, he detached Early to the protection of Lynchburg, he had given him orders to strike Hunter's force in rear and, if possible, to destroy it; then to move down the valley, cross the Potomac, and threaten Washington. After Early had arrived at Lynchburg and Hunter had retreated by the West, General Lee left it to Early's judgment whether to carry out the original plan or to return to Petersburg, and he doubtless knew enough of Early's enterprising temper to be sure which course he would pursue. We are not left in the dark as to Lee's feeling in the matter. On the 20th of June—after the assaults upon Petersburg were over and the siege had begun—he wrote to Jefferson Davis, "I still think it is our policy to draw the attention of the enemy to his own territory. It may force Grant to attack me, or weaken his force. It will also, I think, force Hunter to cross the Potomac, or expose himself to attack. From either of these events I anticipate good results." His subsequent letters, however, show that his strongest hope and reliance was that Grant, goaded by the menace in the North, would rush furiously upon his works at Petersburg.

Lee's
Letter
Book. MS.,
War Department
Archives.



GENERAL FRANZ SIGEL.

CHAP. VII.

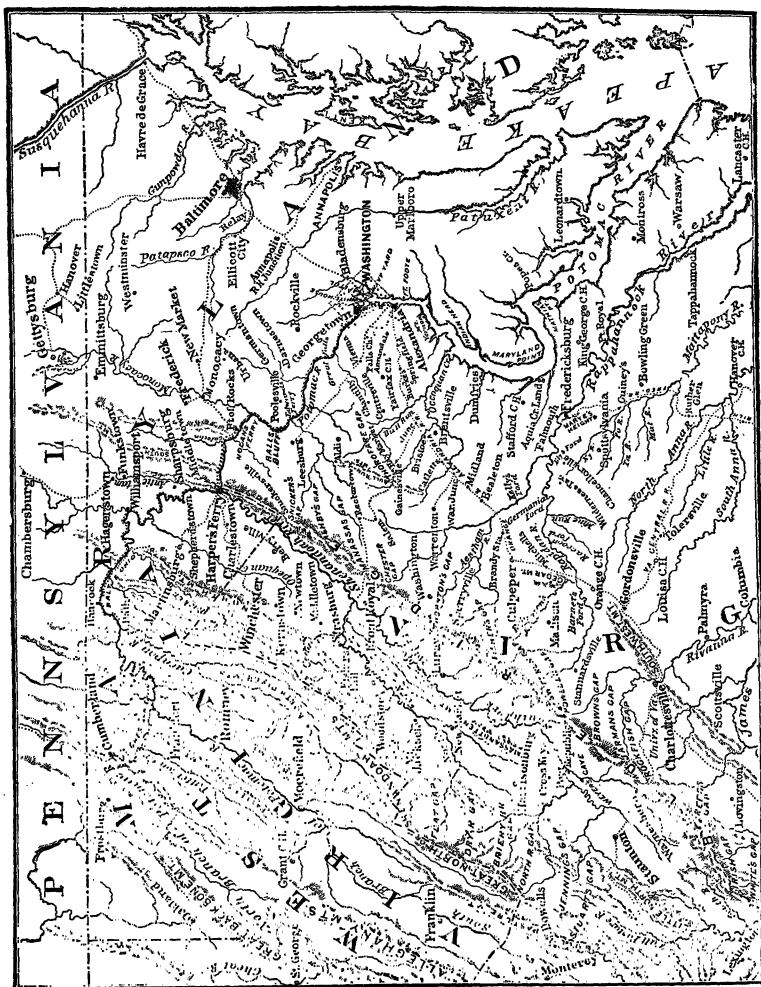
Early started northward with about seventeen thousand men. He traveled with great expedition, having reduced his impediments to the minimum. He reached Winchester on the 2d of July, and sent his cavalry forward to destroy the railroad in rear of Sigel and if possible to cut off his retreat.

1864.

But Sigel made his way to Shepherdstown in time to save most of the stores in his charge, and Colonel J. A. Mulligan, well known for his gallant defense of Lexington, checked the Confederate cavalry in an engagement at Leetown, enabling Sigel to establish himself safely on Maryland Heights, where, once fixed, he remained, in spite of demonstrations to the right and left of him.¹ This move was a serious disappointment to Early. "My desire had been," he says, "to manoeuvre the enemy out of Maryland Heights, so as to enable me to move directly from Harper's Ferry to Washington; but he had taken refuge in his strongly fortified works, and, as they could not be approached without great difficulty, and an attempt to carry them by assault would have resulted in greater loss than the advantage to be gained would justify, I determined to move through the gaps of South Mountain." At daybreak of the 8th of July his whole force began to move through the passes. The next morning General B. T. Johnson was sent with a brigade of cavalry and a battery of horse artillery to break all the railroads leading into Baltimore and threaten that city; then to move towards Point

Early,
"Memoir of
the Last
Year of the
War,"
p. 56.

¹ The dissatisfaction of General Grant and General Halleck with command, and General Albion General Franz Sigel had, however, now reached its climax, and he was finally removed from command, and General Albion P. Howe sent to Harper's Ferry in his place.



OUTLINE MAP OF THE SHENANDOAH VALLEY.

Lookout to coöperate in a scheme for the release of the prisoners there, which had been devised at Richmond. These orders to Johnson form the strongest proof that Early really hoped to capture the capital; the force of Johnson was sent to Lookout, to use Early's own words, "for the purpose of releasing the prisoners if we should succeed in getting into Washington."

This purpose of Early was not so absurd as, after its failure, it seemed. It cannot be denied that Washington had been left nearly unguarded. The confidence felt by the President in the prudence of Grant had permitted almost all the effective force to be sent to the Army of the Potomac. Hunter's line of retreat had opened the valley to the Confederates, and he was now, with the greatest possible exertion, it is true, striving to make his way back to his post, against the obstacles of bad roads and low water in the river. With his exhausted and footsore soldiers there was no chance of his arriving before the enemy. General Lew. Wallace, who in Hunter's absence had been left in command of the department, had a small force at Baltimore; Washington was garrisoned by a force of hundred days men — the Veteran Reserves (or invalid corps), District of Columbia Volunteers, and a few dismounted cavalry. As the enemy approached, General Meigs hastily organized some two thousand quartermaster's employees and put them into the lines. In numbers the garrison was strong enough to withstand attack, being a total of twenty thousand men of all sorts, but they were mostly raw, undisciplined, and unavailable. The great reliance was, after all, in the fortifications,

General
Barnard,
"Report on
Defenses of
Washing-
ton."

CHAP. VII. which had been constructed with the greatest care, and supported and commanded each other in such fashion that a comparatively small force of disciplined troops could have held them indefinitely against any attack. Halleck reported to General Grant this state of affairs, but the General-in-Chief was slow to believe that any serious movement was in progress. After Early had seized Martinsburg, so late as the 3d of July, Grant insisted that he was at Petersburg, and that it was impossible he could be threatening Hunter's department. But after Grant became convinced that Early was on the Potomac, he at once ordered the Sixth Corps to the rescue, Ricketts, who started first, going to Baltimore, where he arrived on the 8th, and Wright, with Getty's and D. A. Russell's divisions, embarking at midnight of the 9th and coming directly to Washington. There was never a more opportune march and arrival.

1864.

Early,
"Memoir
of the
Last Year
of the War,"
p. 59.

The advance of Early caused great consternation throughout Maryland and Southern Pennsylvania. The quiet farmers saw their crops stolen by the troopers or committed to the flames; the towns were laid under ruinous requisitions of money—\$200,000 at Frederick, \$20,000 at Hagerstown—on pain of conflagration in case of refusal. His reassuring proclamations, taken in connection with the action of his soldiers, did nothing to allay the terror excited by his march. He proceeded on his way without opposition, until, moving out of Frederick, he met the force with which General Wallace had come from Baltimore, and which, although it had been much aided and strengthened by Ricketts's fine division of the Sixth Corps, was obviously

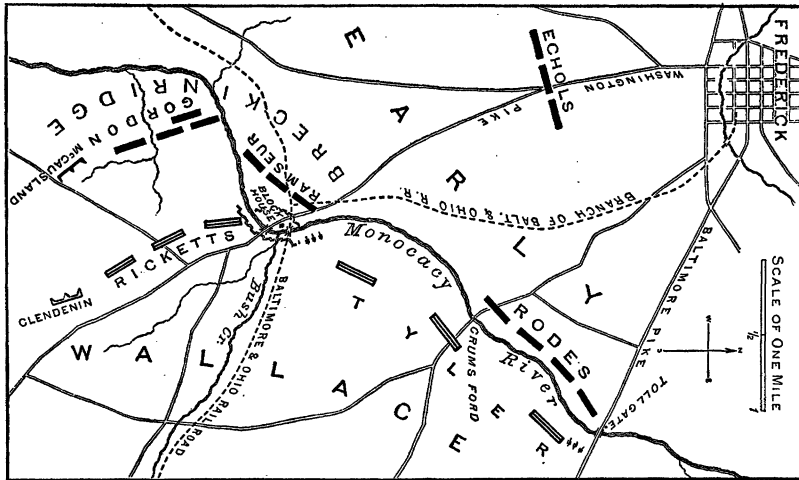
inadequate to cope with General Early's army. At the Monocacy River, General Wallace made a creditable fight; General Ricketts, who behaved with his usual coolness and energy, was severely wounded, and both sides suffered considerable loss in killed and wounded; Wallace lost heavily in prisoners, and in the evening fell back on the road to Baltimore, and Early was too full of the thought of Washington to waste time in pursuing.

CHAP. VII.

July 9, 1864.

He marched at daylight of the 10th on the Georgetown Pike, and camped at night only four miles north of Rockville. It was an anxious Sunday throughout the North. Troops were everywhere called out, in various degrees of unreadiness. Every available man in Baltimore and Washington was put into the trenches. Johnson's cavalry was active in Northern Maryland; Harry Gilmor captured two passenger trains at Gunpowder River, backed one of them upon the great bridge, and burned bridge and train together. But the principal object of Johnson's raid, the release of Confederate prisoners at Point Lookout, was not accomplished nor even attempted; the burning of Governor Bradford's house in the suburbs of Baltimore gained the Confederate arms neither credit nor advantage.

It has been the habit of all military writers who have discussed this campaign to represent the civil departments of the Government as a prey to terror and panic during this and the following day. But those who were at Richmond are not the best witnesses of what was taking place at Washington; neither Lincoln, nor Stanton, nor even Halleck, whom it is still more fashionable to abuse, lacked



BATTLE OF THE MONOCACY.

CHAP. VII. coolness or energy in the emergency. They of course recognized the fact that Washington was imperfectly defended, and the possibility of its capture; but they regarded this contingency as highly improbable, and not satisfied with repulsing the enemy, they were especially anxious that a force strong enough to move out and destroy Early's army should be put in motion for Washington. Grant entirely agreed in this view. "If the rebel force," he said, "now North, can be captured or destroyed, I would willingly postpone aggressive operations to destroy them." He even offered, if the President thought it advisable, to leave everything at Petersburg on the defensive, and to start for Washington at an hour's notice to command in person the operations against Early.

Badeau,
"Military
History of
U. S.
Grant."
Vol. II.,
pp. 436, 437.

The President, in his anxiety to have the invading force destroyed, accepted this proposition,

saying he thought there was really a fair chance of doing it, if the movement were prompt. At the same time, with his habitual consideration for a trusted general, he told Grant that this was in pursuance of his own suggestion, and was not an order. Grant, however, "on reflection" had changed his mind, and concluded it would have a bad effect for him to leave Petersburg at that moment. He telegraphed to the President his belief, in view of the fact that Wright and Ord and Hunter were on the ground, that "the enemy will never be able to get back with much of his force." The President could not entirely share this placid faith; he had too often seen the enemy retire from the Potomac undisturbed by pursuit; but he answered General Grant's dispatch expressing his satisfaction at his decision, but adding, "The enemy will learn of Wright's arrival, and then the difficulty will be to unite Wright and Hunter south of the enemy before he will recross the Potomac. Some firing between Rockville and here now." Even with the sound of hostile guns in his ears, he writes with the utmost calmness to General Grant at Petersburg, thinking only of the chance of crushing the army which has ventured so far from its base and forecasting the actual result far more accurately than the general. He thought perhaps too little of his personal safety. On the night of the 10th he left the White House as usual and rode out to his summer residence at the Soldiers' Home, in the northern suburb, a few miles from Early's bivouac. Other officers of the Government, in view of possible contingencies, disapproved of this impassive conduct; Mr. Stanton, finding the enemy

CHAP. VII.

Grant
to Lincoln,
July 10,
1864. MS.Lincoln to
Grant,
July 11,
1864. MS.

July, 1864,

advancing in heavy force on the Tenallytown and Seventh Street roads, sent out to the Soldiers' Home and insisted upon the President's coming into Washington; and Captain Fox, the Assistant Secretary of the Navy, without the President's knowledge, had a vessel made ready in case of a serious disaster. CHAP. VII.

General Early left his camp near Rockville at dawn on the 11th, and pushed forward with eager hopes upon Washington. The infantry, turning to the left, advanced by the Seventh Street road, which runs by Silver Spring into the city, with a cloud of cavalry on either flank. The day was hot and dusty, and the troops suffered greatly, but inspired by the prospect of the rich prize before them, they plodded onward with good heart, and shortly after noon Early, riding a little in advance of his column, came in sight of Fort Stevens, which guarded the entrance to Washington by Seventh Street. A brief survey convinced him "that the works were but feebly manned"; the greatest achievement of the war seemed to be within his grasp. He ordered General Rodes to "bring his division into line as rapidly as possible, and to move into the works if he could." But before the column, which was moving by flank, could be brought up, Early, who was gazing intently at the line of works in his front, saw to his infinite vexation a column¹ of men in blue file into them on the right and left; a fringe of skirmishers was thrown out in front, and from all the batteries in range a sharp artillery fire opened. His hopes of a surprise passed away in July, 1864.

Early,
"Memoir
of the
Last Year
of the
War," p. 60.

¹ Humphreys, "The Virginia Campaign of '64 and '65," p. 244, says this column consisted of 600 dismounted cavalymen.

CHAP. VII. the wreathing smoke of the National guns, and he gave orders for a close reconnaissance of the position.

Early,
"Memoir
of the
Last Year
of the
War," p. 61.

The whole afternoon was consumed in this work, and as it proceeded the prospect for the Confederates became every hour more discouraging. The obstacles might have appeared insurmountable to even a better soldier than General Early: "Inclosed forts for heavy artillery with a tier of lower works in front of each, pierced for an immense number of guns, the whole being connected by curtains, with ditches in front, and strengthened by palisades and abatis. . . Every possible approach was raked with artillery." In vain did he seek a point of entry on either side. As far as his eye could reach to the left over the bare spaces where the forests had been leveled to give play to the guns, the same powerful works; and his cavalry coming in from the right reported the fortifications on the Georgetown pike to be still more impregnable. Early might well be excused for declining to rush his tired army upon those bristling works; he had less than 20,000 men—he says "about 8000 muskets," but he always looked at his own force through the wrong end of his field-glass—and he was laboring under a serious error in regard to the troops in front of him. He had captured some of the Sixth Corps at the Monocacy; the newspapers had informed him of the departure of heavy reënforcements from Petersburg; and when he saw the improvised levies of General Augur filing into the works in the afternoon, he came, not unnaturally, to the conclusion that he had to deal with the veterans of the Army of the Potomac.

CHAP. VII.

July 11, 1864.

This supposed state of affairs called for the most careful preparation, and before the preparations were completed what he had imagined had become true: Wright with his two magnificent divisions had landed at the wharf, being received by President Lincoln in person amid a tumult of joyous cheering; and the advance of the Nineteenth Corps under W. H. Emory was also in the streets of Washington. When the rear of Early's infantry closed up in the evening, the capital was already safe from a *coup de main*.

It was with much diminution of his high spirits of the morning that Early called his generals together for consultation on the night of the 11th. There was clearly no time to be lost. Washington must be assaulted immediately if at all. The passes of South Mountain would soon be closed, he said—not knowing that Julius Stahel's troopers had already occupied them. But it was like parting soul and body for Early to give up his hope of seizing Washington, and he broke up the conference, saying he would assault the works at day-break next morning, unless it should previously be shown to be impracticable. In the night he received false information from Bradley T. Johnson that two corps of the Army of the Potomac had arrived. He therefore delayed his attack until he could make one final reconnaissance; he rode to the front, and found the parapets lined with troops. With the dome of the Capitol in his sight, gilded by the rays of the rising sun, he gave up all hope of capturing Washington. He knew, however, that it would be most unwise to turn and run by daylight in the face of such an enemy, and he therefore determined

CHAP. VII. to maintain a bold front until nightfall, and then make good his retreat.

The evening before, Wright had proposed to send out a brigade to clear away the enemy's skirmish line, but this was not thought advisable by General Augur until the Union lines were better established. At night the Sixth Corps relieved the pickets and intrenched their line. On the morning of the 12th skirmishing began and continued all the morning, and in the afternoon Daniel D. Bidwell's brigade of Getty's division was sent out by Wright to drive the Confederate skirmishers from a house and orchard near the Silver Spring road. Rodes's division, which was in possession of the place, stood its ground handsomely, and a severe engagement ensued, which has a special interest from the fact that it was fought in full view of the Capitol, and was witnessed by the President of the United States on one side and on the other by General Breckinridge, the candidate who had received the suffrages of the seceding States in 1860.

July, 1864. The President had resolutely refrained from giving military orders during the invasion — though sorely tempted to do so, on account of the disinclination of Grant and Halleck to interfere with each other's authority — but his interest in the progress of affairs was intense and ardent, and his presence among the soldiers roused the greatest enthusiasm. When Rodes's division arrived on the afternoon of the 11th he saw the first shots exchanged in front of Fort Stevens, and stood in the fort, his tall figure making him a conspicuous mark, until ordered to withdraw; and on the 12th, when Bidwell's brigade marched, in perfect order,

CHAP. VII,
July 12, 1864.

out of the works, to drive the enemy from the Rives house, the President again stood, apparently unconscious of danger, watching, with that grave and passive countenance, the progress of the fight amid the whizzing bullets of the sharp-shooters, until an officer fell mortally wounded within three feet of him, and General Wright peremptorily represented to him the needless risk he was running. The national troops marched out with disciplined valor, worthy of the place and the spectators; they advanced in unbroken formation up the slight acclivity in the face of a destructive fire, drove the Confederates from the orchard and the grove which sheltered them, and pushed the enemy's pickets back for a mile. The success was gained not without loss; two hundred and eighty of the small force engaged were killed and wounded.

General Early waited only for nightfall to withdraw his troops from a position which had become full of peril. The next morning his camps had vanished. Everybody was eager for the pursuit to begin; but Grant was too far away to give the necessary orders; the President, true to the position he had taken when Grant was made general-in-chief, would not interfere, though he observed with anguish the undisturbed retreat of Early; Halleck, whose growing disposition to avoid responsibility had become only too apparent, merely told Augur what Wright ought to do to strike the retiring column, and at noon Wright, having been put by a telegram from Grant in command of all the available troops, got away at the head of a considerable force, and marched with commendable celerity to Poolesville, twenty-six

CHAP. VII. miles from Washington, which he reached on
July, 1864. the evening of the 14th. But Early had too long a
start, and his hardy infantry were too fleet to be
overtaken. He crossed the Potomac at White's
Ford, in Loudon county, on the morning of the
14th, taking with him most of the plunder he had
amassed in Maryland.

Wright reported on the evening of the 14th to
Halleck for instructions, believing that his force,
about 10,500, was not sufficient to justify his cross-
ing the river in pursuit of Early. Halleck an-
swered in general terms repeating Grant's wish that
pursuit should be made. At first Grant's orders
were peremptory for pursuit, but his knowledge of
the situation was imperfect. On the 13th he was
anxious only that the enemy should be driven out
of Maryland; on the next day, finding Early was
south of the river, he urged a helter-skelter pursuit
by "veterans, militiamen, men on horseback, and
everything that could be got to follow, to eat out
Virginia clear and clean, as far as they go, so that
crows flying over it for the balance of the season
will have to carry their provender with them." In
a letter of the same date, he said that Hunter
should make the valley a desert. But on the 16th,
the day Early, after two days' rest near Leesburg,
resumed his march towards the passes of the Blue
Ridge which led into the valley, Grant changed his
mind about the pursuit, and said to Halleck that
there could be no use in Wright's following the
enemy a day behind, and ordered, "As soon as the
rebel army is known to have passed Hunter's
forces, recall Wright, and send him back here with
all dispatch, and also send the Nineteenth Corps."

Badeau,
"Military
History of
U. S.
Grant,"
Vol. II.,
p. 446.

Ibid., p. 447.

Halleck protested, and with reason, against executing these orders, so long as Early remained in the valley; they were suspended, then repeated and again suspended, and the Sixth and Nineteenth Corps were finally allowed to stay where great glory and usefulness awaited them.

Wright crossed the river and chased Early to the Shenandoah; Hunter, having come up on the other flank, continued the pursuit, but the Confederates were so far in advance that little damage was done until the 20th of July, when Hunter's cavalry, under Wm. W. Averill, moved out from Martinsburg and inflicted a stinging defeat upon Ramseur's division; Early retired to Strasburg, where he arrived on the 22d. Wright meanwhile returned to Washington; and on the 24th Early turned upon Crook, who was at Kernstown, and routed him, the gallant Colonel Mulligan being mortally wounded. Crook, however, made his retreat in good order and with such skill as to save his artillery and trains. Early followed in hot pursuit, and drove the Union forces across the Potomac. The President had feared and partly anticipated this disaster. He had telegraphed to Hunter on the 23d, "Are you able to take care of the enemy when he turns back upon you, as he probably will, on finding that Wright has left?" and Hunter had answered that his force was insufficient for the purpose. General Grant's distance from the scene and lack of perfect knowledge of the situation, the President's unwillingness to interfere with his orders, and Halleck's reluctance to assume authority which he thought did not belong to him, were the causes to which may be attributed the unsatis-

1864.

Lincoln to
Hunter,
July 23,
1864. MS.

MS.

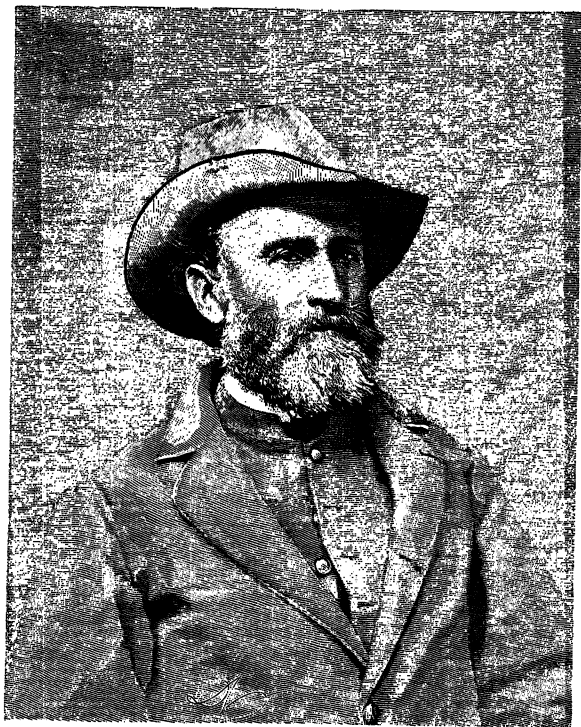
CHAP. VII. factory progress of affairs during this discouraging midsummer season. There was, notwithstanding, perfect harmony of feeling and intention between Grant and the Government. They were all resolved, regardless of personal or political considerations, to do everything possible to end the war. Grant had no hesitation in asking, on the 19th of July, that the President should call for 300,000 men to recruit the armies wasted by a prodigiously destructive campaign, although the effect of such a call could not but be damaging to the Administration at the outset of a Presidential campaign; and the President was able to answer this dispatch by informing the general that he had already, on the 18th, issued a call for 500,000 men, to be drafted after September 5th if not previously furnished. "Which I suppose," he adds simply, "covers the case. Always glad to hear your suggestions."

Grant to
Lincoln.
MS.

July 20,
1864. MS.

But for the moment there was no adequate force in front of Early, and encouraged by his long immunity, the instincts of a freebooter began to wake in him, and he determined upon a rapid campaign of plunder and destruction. His appetite for valid money had been whetted by the exactions levied on the unfortunate towns which he had visited in Maryland, and he now sent his cavalry forward under John McCausland to ransom or destroy other towns near the border of that State and Pennsylvania. The town of Chambersburg was the first one selected for that barbarous treatment. McCausland reached the place on the 30th of July, and presented to some of the citizens, arrested for that purpose, a written demand for \$500,000 in currency or \$100,000 in gold on penalty of the immediate

Early,
"Memoir"
of the Last
Year of the
War,
p. 72.



GENERAL JUBAL A. EARLY.

destruction of the town. Whether Early purposely made a demand impossible to meet, or whether, his ignorance and greed being equal, he thought the wealth of the North was unlimited, can only be conjectured; the truth was the arrested citizens could no more have produced such a sum on the moment than they could have performed any other miracle. But McCausland had no discretion; his superior expressly states in his "Memoir" that his orders were peremptory. The Confederate general first made sure of his breakfast at an hotel, and then ordered Gilmor to burn the town. The task was no welcome one for even this hardened raider. "I felt more like weeping over Chambersburg," he says, but his work was thoroughly done. "The conflagration seemed to spring from one vast building. . . How piteous the sight in those beautiful green meadows—groups of women and children exposed to the rays of a burning sun, hovering over the few articles they had saved, most of them wringing their hands, and with wild gesticulations bemoaning their ruined homes."

CHAP. VII.

July. 1864.

Gilmor,
"Four
Years
in the
Saddle,"
p. 212.

From Chambersburg McCausland rode to Hancock, Maryland, where he demanded a ransom of thirty thousand dollars. This, says Gilmor, "was so out of all reason that we Marylanders remonstrated, but to no purpose. He told the principal men of the place that unless the money was paid he would burn the town." Gilmor, whose sympathies were now thoroughly aroused for the people of his own State, seeing that the place was in imminent risk of being plundered before it was burned, made an effort with his own troopers to

Ibid., p. 213.

CHAP. VII.

Gilmer,
"Four
Years in the
Saddle,"
p. 213.

1864.

Early,
"Memoir of
the Last
Year of the
War,"
p. 75.

guard the houses, while the terrified citizens were trying to raise the money McCausland had required. Before this was accomplished Averill's cavalry came upon the scene, drove out the Confederates, and saved the town, as well as McConellsburg and Bedford which had also been marked for destruction. McCausland retreated to Cumberland, where on the 1st of August he had a sharp skirmish with General Kelley, and then crossed the Potomac and withdrew to Moorefield in Western Virginia. Thither Hunter dispatched General Averill, who on the 7th attacked and routed McCausland, capturing all his guns and trains with over four hundred prisoners, and scattering the residue of the Confederate cavalry through the bridle-paths of the mountains. General Early frankly admits, "This affair had a very damaging effect upon my cavalry for the rest of the campaign."

While these operations were going on, the National infantry were marching and countermarching in every direction, to little purpose, under contradictory orders, and had at last been posted at Frederick to guard against another possible advance on Washington. The confusion arose primarily from the fact that General Grant disbelieved¹ in Early's movement northward up to the moment he defeated Crook at Kernstown, and therefore wanted the Sixth Corps sent back to him, and that Halleck holding a different belief, yet hesitated about taking the responsibility of giving the orders absolutely

¹ On the 23d of July, Grant, at Petersburg, telegraphed Halleck: "Early is undoubtedly re- turning here to enable the enemy to detach troops to go to Georgia." — Badeau, Vol. II., p. 451.

necessary under the circumstances. Grant was too far away to take advantage of the hourly changes in the situation, and Hunter, who was as zealous and energetic as a man need be, was rendered powerless by the lack of harmonious coöperation between his two superior officers. Grant, seeing the difficulty, had recommended the consolidation of the four departments — the Susquehanna, the Middle, Western Virginia, and Washington — under one commander, and had mentioned for that duty General W. B. Franklin. This suggestion was not favorably received by the War Department, and General Grant next suggested General Meade. The President, seeing more clearly than any one else the wide range of personal complications which such a change would involve, asked Grant to name a time when they could meet at Fort Monroe; but their meeting was prevented by the state of affairs at Deep Bottom and Petersburg.

On the 1st of August General Grant made a new choice, which was one of his happiest inspirations, and formed a resolution which proved of inestimable benefit in its results. He hastily relieved General Sheridan from the command of the cavalry corps, and ordered him North, sending an additional division of cavalry after him, at the same time informing Halleck, "I am sending General Sheridan for temporary duty whilst the enemy is being expelled from the border. Unless General Hunter is in the field in person, I want Sheridan put in command of all the troops in the field, with instructions to put himself south of the enemy and follow him to the death. Wherever the enemy goes, let our troops go also." This

Grant,
"Personal
Memoirs,"
Vol. II.,
p. 317.

CHAP. VII. dispatch was shown to the President. It embodied precisely his own wishes; he had been agonizing to have exactly this thing done. But he found, in conversation with Halleck, and perhaps with others, that no measures, or at least none sufficiently energetic, were being taken to carry Grant's suggestion into effect. He had before this remarked, with pain and disappointment, a tendency in General Halleck to shrink from the exercise of authority in emergencies, and to throw upon himself or Grant the burden of all important decisions. He saw, in this instance, that if he did not interfere the campaign would be lost by hesitation and delay. In violation, therefore, of all official etiquette, and, as some critics think, of propriety, he telegraphed to Grant on the 3d of August, quoting his dispatch given above, and adding, "This I think is exactly right, as to how our forces should move. But please look over the dispatches you may have received from here ever since you made that order, and discover if you can that there is any idea in the head of any one here of 'putting our army *south* of the enemy' or of 'following him to the *death*' in any direction. I repeat to you, it will neither be done nor attempted, unless you watch it every day and hour, and force it."

1864.

Lincoln to Grant. MS.

We will not stop to defend the taste or regularity of this dispatch. It was at least perfectly lucid, and it answered the purpose. In two hours Grant was on the way to Monocacy Station, where he arrived the next evening. It was evident by this time that a defensive position at Frederick was no longer necessary, and that the point already selected by Hunter, at Halltown, for the concentra-

tion of his troops might be occupied at once. This was immediately done, under Grant's instructions, which provided further for an active campaign against the enemy, and the devastation of the Shenandoah Valley, so that "nothing should be left to invite the enemy to return. Take all provisions, forage, and stock wanted for the use of your command; such as cannot be consumed, destroy. It is not desirable that the buildings should be destroyed—they should rather be protected; but the people should be informed that so long as an army can subsist among them recurrences of these raids must be expected, and we are determined to stop them at all hazards."

CHAP. VII.

Grant,
"Personal
Memoirs,"
Vol. II.,
p. 582.

The move to Halltown brought Hunter's army upon Early's right flank and rear. Early had again moved on the 4th to the Potomac—a demonstration which had become instinctive with him—and the next day his whole army had crossed once more into Maryland by the Williamsport and Shepherds-town fords, visiting the Antietam battleground. But this threatening movement made no impression on the impassive commander of the National armies. His habit of minimizing his enemy's numbers here stood to his advantage. He wrote to Halleck that there was "no great force of the enemy north of the Potomac"; and, in fact, Early only remained one day, and on the 7th retired to Bunker Hill.

Aug., 1864.

In conversation with General Hunter, Grant suggested that he should establish the headquarters of his department at Cumberland or Baltimore, leaving to Sheridan the command of the troops in the field. The gallant veteran promptly offered to resign his position if it seemed that another officer

CHAP. VII. could assume it with the prospect of more harmonious relations with his superiors, and consequently of more successful results. Grant eagerly accepted this generous self-sacrifice, and telegraphed for Sheridan to come to the Monocacy. He responded in person by special train; the troops were all gone over the Potomac to Halltown; no one was left at the station but the three generals and their staffs. Grant in few words gave Sheridan the instructions he had prepared for Hunter and returned to Petersburg. Sheridan, on the 7th of August, at Harper's Ferry, formally assumed command of the Middle Military Division, comprising the four departments already mentioned.

Grant,
"Personal
Memoirs,"
Vol. II.,
p. 320.
1864.

His army, which was afterwards called the Army of the Shenandoah, consisted of the Sixth Corps, under General Wright; the Nineteenth Corps, part present and part on the way, under General Cuvier Grover; Crook's Army of Western Virginia; Torbert's division of cavalry from the Army of the Potomac, and Charles R. Lowell, Jr.'s reserve brigade. Averill's division, Alfred N. Duffié's troops, and J. H. Wilson's division of cavalry from the Army of the Potomac were also on the march to join him. Sheridan desired that this splendid cavalry force should be made a corps and commanded by one of his own men, and Grant immediately authorized this to be done. In spite of Averill's recent and brilliant success, A. T. A. Torbert was made chief of cavalry, and Merritt succeeded to the command of his division. It was, of course, the finest army ever brought together in the Shenandoah Valley, consisting of some 22,000 infantry present for duty,

and of about 8000 horse. The field returns show nearly fifty per cent. more than these figures, or about 43,000 officers and men; but, all proper reductions being made, both Grant and Sheridan regarded 30,000 as the fighting force of the Army of the Shenandoah.

CHAP. VII.

See
Badeau,
"Military
History of
U. S.
Grant."
Vol. III.,
Appendix,
p. 656.

CHAPTER VIII

HORACE GREELEY'S PEACE MISSION

CHAP. VIII.

NOT least among the troubles and the vexations of the summer of 1864 was the constant criticism of sincere Republicans who were impatient at what they considered the slow progress of the war, and irritated at the deliberation with which Mr. Lincoln weighed every important act before decision. Besides this, a feeling of discouragement had taken possession of some of the more excitable spirits, which induced them to give ready hospitality to any suggestions of peace. Foremost among these was Horace Greeley, who, in personal interviews, in private letters, and in the columns of the "Tribune," repeatedly placed before the President, with that vigor of expression in which he was unrivaled, the complaints and the discontents of a considerable body of devoted, if not altogether reasonable, Union men. The attitude of benevolent criticism which he was known to sustain towards the Administration naturally drew around him a certain number of adventurers and busy-bodies, who fluttered between the two great parties, and were glad to occupy the attention of prominent men on either side with schemes whose only real object was some slight gain or questionable notoriety for themselves.

CHAP. VIII.

A person who called himself "William Cornell Jewett of Colorado" had gained some sort of intimacy with Mr. Greeley by alleging relations with eminent Northern and Southern statesmen. He wrote interminable letters of advice to Mr. Lincoln (as well as to Jefferson Davis), which were never read nor answered, but which, printed with humorous comment in the "New York Herald," were taken seriously by the indiscriminating, and even quoted and discussed in the London papers. He wrote to Mr. Greeley in the early part of July from Niagara Falls, and appears to have convinced the latter that he was an authorized intermediary from the Confederate authorities to make propositions for peace. He wrote that he had just left George N. Sanders of Kentucky on the Canada side. "I am authorized to state to you," he continued, "for our use only, not the public, that two ambassadors of Davis & Co. are now in Canada with full and complete powers for a peace, and Mr. Sanders requests that you come on immediately to me at Cataract House to have a private interview; or, if you will send the President's protection for him and two friends, they will come on and meet you. He says the whole matter can be consummated by me, you, them, and President Lincoln." This letter was followed the next day by a telegram saying: "Will you come here? Parties have full power."

1864.

Jewett to
Greeley,
July 5 and 6,
1864. MS.

Mr. Greeley was greatly impressed by this communication. The inherent improbabilities of it did not seem to strike him, though the antecedents of Sanders were scarcely more reputable than those of Jewett. He sent the letter and the

CHAP. VIII. telegram to the President, inclosed in a letter of his own, the perfervid vehemence of which shows the state of excitement he was laboring under. He refers to his correspondent as "our irrepres-sible friend, Colorado Jewett." He admits some doubt as to the "full powers," but insists upon the Confederate desire for peace. "And there-upon," he says, "I venture to remind you that our bleeding, bankrupt, almost dying country also longs for peace; shudders at the prospect of fresh conscriptions, of further wholesale devastations, and of new rivers of human blood. And a wide-spread conviction that the Government and its prominent supporters are not anxious for peace, and do not improve proffered opportunities to achieve it, is doing great harm now, and is morally certain, unless removed, to do far greater in the approaching elections." He then rebukes Mr. Lincoln for not having received the Stephens embassy, disapproves the warlike tone of the Baltimore platform, urges the President to make overtures for peace in time to affect the North Carolina elections, and suggests the following plan of adjustment:

1. The Union is restored and declared perpetual.
2. Slavery is utterly and forever abolished throughout the same.
3. A complete amnesty for all political offenses.
4. Payment of \$400,000,000 to the slave States, pro rata, for their slaves.
5. The slave States to be represented in proportion to their total population.
6. A National Convention to be called at once.

The letter closes with this impassioned appeal: "Mr. President, I fear you do not realize how intently the people desire any peace consistent with

the national integrity and honor, and how joyously they would hail its achievement and bless its authors. With United States stocks worth but forty cents in gold per dollar, and drafting about to commence on the third million of Union soldiers, can this be wondered at? I do not say that a just peace is now attainable, though I believe it to be so. But I do say that a frank offer by you to the insurgents, of terms which the impartial will say ought to be accepted, will, at the worst, prove an immense and sorely needed advantage to the national cause; it may save us from a Northern insurrection." In a postscript Mr. Greeley again urges the President to invite "those now at Niagara to exhibit their credentials and submit their ultimatum."

Greeley
to Lincoln,
July 7, 1864.
MS.

Mr. Lincoln determined at once to take action upon this letter. He had no faith in Jewett's story. He doubted whether the embassy had any existence, except in the imagination of Sanders and Jewett. But he felt the unreasonableness and injustice of Mr. Greeley's letter, while he did not doubt his good faith; and he resolved to convince him at least, and perhaps others of his way of thinking, that there was no foundation for the reproaches they were casting upon the Government for refusing to treat with the rebels. That there might be no opportunity for dispute in relation to the facts of the case, he arranged that the witness of his willingness to listen to any overtures which might come from the South should be Mr. Greeley himself. He answered his letter at once, on the 9th of July, saying: "If you can find any person, anywhere, professing to have any proposition of Jefferson Davis in writing, for peace, embracing

CHAP. VIII. the restoration of the Union, and abandonment of slavery, whatever else it embraces, say to him he may come to me with you, and that if he really brings such proposition he shall at the least have safe conduct with the paper (and without publicity, if he chooses) to the point where you shall have met him. The same if there be two or more persons."

Lincoln to
Greeley,
July 9, 1864.
MS.

Mr. Greeley answered this letter the next day in evident embarrassment. The President had surprised him by his frank and prompt acquiescence in his suggestions. He had accepted the first two points of Mr. Greeley's plan of adjustment — the restoration of the Union, and the abandonment of slavery — as the only preliminary conditions of negotiations upon which he would insist, and requested this vehement advocate of peace to bring forward his ambassadors. Mr. Greeley's reply of the 10th seems somewhat lacking both in temper and in candor. He thought the negotiators would not "open their budget" to him; repeated his reproaches at the "rude repulse" of Stephens; referred again to the importance of doing something in time for the North Carolina elections; and said at least he would try to get a look into the hand of the men at Niagara, though he had "little heart for it." But on the 13th he wrote in a much more positive manner. He said: "I have now information, on which I can rely, that two persons, duly commissioned and empowered to negotiate for peace, are at this moment not far from Niagara Falls in Canada, and are desirous of conferring with yourself, or with such persons as you may appoint and empower to treat with them. Their

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names (only given in confidence) are Hon. Clement C. Clay of Alabama and Hon. Jacob Thompson of Mississippi." He added that he knew nothing and had proposed nothing as to terms; that it seemed to him high time an effort should be made to terminate the wholesale slaughter. He hoped to hear that the President had concluded to act in the premises, and to act so promptly as to do some good in the North Carolina elections.

CHAP. VIII.
Greeley
to Lincoln,
July 13,
1864. MS.

On the receipt of this letter, which was written four days after Mr. Greeley had been fully authorized to bring to Washington any one he could find empowered to treat for peace, and which yet was based on the assumption of the President's unwillingness to do the very thing he had already done, Mr. Lincoln resolved to put an end to a correspondence which promised to be indefinitely prolonged, by sending an aide-de-camp to New York to arrange in a personal interview what it seemed impossible to conclude by mail. On the 15th he sent Mr. Greeley a brief telegram expressing his disappointment, saying, "I was not expecting you to send me a letter, but to bring me a man or men," and announced the departure of a messenger with a letter. The letter was of the briefest. It merely said: "Yours of the 13th is just received, and I am disappointed that you have not already reached here with those commissioners, if they would consent to come, on being shown my letter to you of the 9th inst. Show that and this to them, and if they will come on the terms stated in the former, bring them. I not only intend a sincere effort for peace, but I intend that you shall be a personal witness that it is made."

MS.

Lincoln to
Greeley,
July 15,
1864. MS.

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This curt and peremptory missive was delivered to Mr. Greeley by Major John Hay early on the morning of the 16th. Mr. Greeley was still somewhat reluctant to go; he thought some one not so well known would be less embarrassed by public curiosity; but said finally that he would start at once if he could be given a safe conduct for four persons, to be named by him. Major Hay communicated this to the President and received the required order in reply. "If there is or is not anything in the affair," he wrote, "I wish to know it without unnecessary delay."

Lincoln to
Hay,
July 16, 1864.
MS.

The safe conduct was immediately written and given to Mr. Greeley, who started at once for Niagara. It provided that Clement C. Clay, Jacob Thompson, James P. Holcombe, and George N. Sanders should have safe conduct to Washington in company with Horace Greeley, and should be exempt from arrest or annoyance of any kind from any officer of the United States during their journey. Nothing was said by Mr. Greeley or by Major Hay to the effect that this safe conduct modified in any respect the conditions imposed by the President's letter of the 9th. It merely carried into effect the proposition made in that letter. On arriving at Niagara, Mr. Greeley placed himself at once in the hands of Jewett, who was waiting to receive him, and sent by him a letter addressed to Clay, Thompson, and Holcombe, in which he said: "I am informed that you are duly accredited from Richmond as the bearers of propositions looking to the establishment of peace; that you desire to visit Washington in the fulfillment of your mission; and that you further desire that Mr. George

N. Sanders shall accompany you. If my information be thus far substantially correct, I am authorized by the President of the United States to tender you his safe conduct on the journey proposed, and to accompany you at the earliest time that will be agreeable to you."

CHAP. VIII.

Mc-
Pherson,
"History
of the
Rebellion,"
p. 301.

No clearer proof can be given than is afforded in this letter that Mr. Greeley was absolutely ignorant of all the essential facts appertaining to the negotiation in which he was engaged. As it turned out, he had been misinformed even as to the personnel of the embassy, Jacob Thompson not being, and not having been, in company with the others; none of them had any authority to act in the capacity attributed to them; and, worse than all this, Mr. Greeley kept out of view, in his missive thus shot at a venture, the very conditions which Mr. Lincoln had imposed in his letter of the 9th and repeated in that of the 15th. Yet, with all the advantages thus afforded them, Clay and Holcombe felt themselves too bare and naked of credentials to accept Mr. Greeley's offer, and were therefore compelled to answer that they had not been accredited from Richmond, as assumed in his note. They made haste to say, however, that they were acquainted with the views of their Government, and could easily get credentials, or other agents could be accredited in their place, if they could be sent to Richmond armed with "the circumstances disclosed in this correspondence." It is incomprehensible that a man of Mr. Greeley's experience should not have recognized at once the purport of this proposal. It simply meant that Mr. Lincoln should take the initiative in suing the Richmond author-

CHAP. VIII. ities for peace, on terms to be proposed by them. The essential impossibility of these terms was not apparent to Mr. Greeley; he merely saw that the situation was somewhat different from what he had expected, and therefore acknowledged the receipt of the letter, promised to report to Washington and solicit fresh instructions, and then telegraphed to Mr. Lincoln the substance of what Clay and Holcombe had written. The President, with unwearied patience, drew up a final paper, which he sent by Major Hay to Niagara, informing Mr. Greeley by telegraph that it was on the way. This information Mr. Greeley at once sent over the border with many apologies for the delay.

Major Hay arrived at Niagara on the 20th of July with a paper in the President's own handwriting, expressed in these words :

EXECUTIVE MANSION,
WASHINGTON, July 18, 1864.

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN : Any proposition which embraces the restoration of peace, the integrity of the whole Union, and the abandonment of slavery, and which comes by and with an authority that can control the armies now at war against the United States, will be received and considered by the Executive Government of the United States, and will be met by liberal terms on other substantial and collateral points, and the bearer or bearers thereof shall have safe conduct both ways.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

Mr. Greeley had already begun to have some impression of the unfortunate position in which he had placed himself, and the reading of this straightforward document still further nettled and perplexed him. He proposed to bring Jewett into conference; this Major Hay declined. He then



HORACE GREELEY.

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July, 1864.

refused to cross the river to Clifton unless Major Hay would accompany him, and himself deliver the paper to the Confederate emissaries. They therefore went together and met Mr. Holcombe in a private room of the Clifton House (Mr. Clay being absent for a day), and handed him the President's letter. After a few moments' conversation they separated, Mr. Greeley returning to New York and Major Hay remaining at Niagara to receive any answer that might be given to the letter. Before taking the train Mr. Greeley had an interview with Jewett, unknown to Major Hay, in which he seems to have authorized Jewett to continue to act as his representative. Jewett lost no time in acquainting the emissaries with this fact, informing them of the departure of Mr. Greeley, of his regret at "the sad termination of the initiatory steps taken for peace, from the change made by the President in his instructions given him to convey commissioners to Washington for negotiations, unconditionally," and that Mr. Greeley would be pleased to receive their answer through him (Jewett). They replied to Jewett with mutual compliments, inclosing a long letter to Mr. Greeley arraigning the President for his alleged breach of faith, which Jewett promptly communicated to the newspapers of the country without notice to Major Hay, informing him afterwards in a note that he did this by way of revenging the slight of the preceding day.

In giving the letter of the rebel emissaries to the press instead of sending it to its proper destination, Jewett accomplished the purpose for which it was written. It formed a not ineffective docu-

CHAP. VIII. ment in a heated political campaign. It would be difficult to ascertain, at this day, whether Mr. Greeley ever communicated to Jewett or Sanders, and whether they, in their constant flittings to and fro over the Suspension Bridge, ever made known to Clay and Holcombe, the conditions of negotiation laid down by Mr. Lincoln in his letters of the 9th and 15th of July. At all events they pretended to be ignorant of any such conditions, and assumed that the President had sent Mr. Greeley to invite them to Washington without credentials and without conditions, to convey to Richmond his overtures of peace. They did not say with any certainty that even in that event his overtures would have been accepted, but expressed the hope that in case the war must continue there might "have been infused into its conduct something more of the spirit which softens and partially redeems its brutalities." They then went on to accuse the President of a "sudden and entire change of views," of a "rude withdrawal of a courteous overture," of "fresh blasts of war to the bitter end"; attributing this supposed change to some "mysteries of his Cabinet" or some "caprice of his imperial will." They plainly intimated that while the South desired peace, it would not accept any arrangement which bartered away its self-government; and in conclusion they called upon their fellow-Confederates to strip from their "eyes the last film of such delusion" that peace is possible, and if there were "any patriots or Christians" in the North, they implored them "to recall the abused authority and vindicate the outraged civilization of the country."

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Even this impudent and uncandid manifesto did not convince Mr. Greeley that he had committed an error. On the contrary, he adopted the point of view of the rebel emissaries, and contended after his return to New York that he regarded the safe conduct given him on the 16th of July as a waiver by the President of all the conditions of his former letters. Being attacked by his colleagues of the press for his action at Niagara, he could only defend himself by implied censure of the President, and the discussion grew so warm that both he and his assailants at last joined in a request to Mr. Lincoln to permit the publication of the correspondence between them. This was an excellent opportunity for Mr. Lincoln to vindicate his own proceeding. But he rarely looked at such matters from the point of view of personal advantage, and he feared that the passionate, almost despairing appeals of the most prominent Republican editor in the North for peace at any cost would deepen the gloom in the public mind and have an injurious effect upon the Union cause. He therefore proposed to Mr. Greeley, in case the correspondence should be published, to omit some of the more vehement phrases of his letters and those in which he advocated peace negotiations solely for political effect; at the same time he invited him to come to Washington and talk with him freely. Mr. Greeley, writing on the 8th of August, accepted both suggestions in principle, but he querulously declined going to Washington at that time, on the ground that the President was surrounded by his "bitterest personal enemies," and that his going would only result in further mischief, as at Niagara. "I will

CHAP. VIII. gladly go," he continued, "whenever I feel a hope that their influence has waned." Then, unable to restrain himself, he broke out in new and severe reproaches against the President for not having received Mr. Stephens, for not having sent a deputation to Richmond to ask for peace after Vicksburg, for not having taken the Democrats in Congress at their word, and sent "the three biggest of them as commissioners forthwith, to see what kind of peace they could get." He referred once more to Niagara, and said, magnanimously, "Let the past go"; but added the stern admonition, "Do not let this month pass without an earnest effort for peace." He held out a hope that if the President would turn from the error of his ways he would still help him make peace; but for the time being, "knowing who are nearest you," he gave him up. The only meaning this can have is simply, Dismiss Seward from your Cabinet and do as I tell you, and then perhaps I can save your Administration.

Greeley
to Lincoln,
Aug. 8, 1864.
MS.

The next day, having received another telegram from the President, who, regardless of his own dignity, was still endeavoring to conciliate and convince him, Mr. Greeley wrote another letter, which we shall give more fully than the rest, to show in what a dangerous frame of mind was the editor of the most important organ of public opinion in the North. He begins by refusing to telegraph, "Since I learned by sad experience at Niagara that my dispatches go to the War Department before reaching you."

I fear that my chance for usefulness has passed. I know that nine-tenths of the whole American people,

North and South, are anxious for peace — peace on almost any terms — and utterly sick of human slaughter and devastation. I know that, to the general eye, it now seems that the rebels are anxious to negotiate and that we repulse their advances. I know that if this impression be not removed we shall be beaten out of sight next November. I firmly believe that, were the election to take place to-morrow, the Democratic majority in this State and Pennsylvania would amount to 100,000, and that we should lose Connecticut also. Now if the Rebellion can be crushed before November it will do to go on; if not, we are rushing on certain ruin.

What, then, can I do in Washington? Your trusted advisers nearly all think I ought to go to Fort Lafayette for what I have done already. Seward wanted me sent there for my brief conference with M. Mercier. The cry has steadily been, No truce! No armistice! No negotiation! No mediation! Nothing but surrender at discretion! I never heard of such fatuity before. There is nothing like it in history. It *must* result in disaster, or all experience is delusive.

Now I do not know that a tolerable peace could be had, but I believe it might have been last month; and, at all events, I know that an honest, sincere effort for it would have done us immense good. And I think no Government fighting a rebellion should ever close its ears to any proposition the rebels may make.

I beg you, implore you, to inaugurate or invite proposals for peace forthwith. And in case peace cannot now be made, consent to an *armistice for one year*, each party to retain, unmolested, all it now holds, but the rebel ports to be opened. Meantime, let a national convention be held, and there will surely be no more war at all events.

Greeley
to Lincoln,
Aug. 9, 1864.
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In a letter of the 11th of August, Mr. Greeley closed this extraordinary correspondence by insisting that if his letters were published they should be printed entire. This was accepted by Mr. Lincoln as a veto upon their publication. He could not afford, for the sake of vindicating his own action,

CHAP. VIII. to reveal to the country the despondency — one might almost say the desperation — of one so prominent in Republican councils as the editor of the “Tribune.” The spectacle of this veteran journalist, who was justly regarded as the leading controversial writer on the antislavery side, ready to sacrifice everything for peace, and frantically denouncing the Government for refusing to surrender the contest, would have been, in its effect upon public opinion, a disaster equal to the loss of a great battle. The President had a sincere regard for Mr. Greeley also, and was unwilling to injure him and his great capacities for usefulness by publishing these ill-considered and discouraging utterances. His magnanimity was hardly appreciated. Mr. Greeley, in his letter of the 11th of August, and afterwards, insisted that the President had, in his letter and his dispatch of the 15th of July, changed his ground from that held in his letter of the 9th, which ground, he asserted, was again shifted in his paper “To whom it may concern.” This was, of course, wholly without foundation. The letter of the 9th authorized Mr. Greeley to bring to Washington any one “professing to have any proposition of Jefferson Davis, in writing, for peace, embracing the restoration of the Union, and abandonment of slavery”; the letter of the 15th repeats the offer contained in that of the 9th, saying, “Show that and this to them, and if they will come on the terms stated in the former, bring them.” The next day Major Hay gave Mr. Greeley a formal safe conduct for himself and party, and neither of them thought of it as nullifying the President’s letters. Indeed, Mr. Greeley’s sole posthumous justification for his claim

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that his safe conduct superseded the President's instructions was that Major Hay did not say that it did not. CHAP. VIII.

It was characteristic of Mr. Lincoln that, seeing the temper in which Mr. Greeley regarded the transaction, he dropped the matter and submitted in silence to the misrepresentations to which he was subjected by reason of it. The correspondence preceding the Niagara conference was not published until after the President's death; that subsequent to it sees the light for the first time in these pages. The public, having nothing of the record except the impudent manifesto of Clay and Holcombe, the foolish chatter of Jewett, and such half statements as Mr. Greeley chose to make in answer to the assaults of his confrères of the press, judged Mr. Lincoln unjustly. Some thought he erred in giving any hearing to the rebels; some criticized his choice of a commissioner; and the opposition naturally made the most of his conditions of negotiation, and accused him of embarking in a war of extermination in the interest of the negro. So that this well-meant effort of the President to ascertain what were the possibilities of peace through negotiation, or, failing that, to convince the representative of a large body of Republicans of his willingness to do all he could in that direction, resulted only in putting a keener edge upon the criticisms of his supporters, and in arming his adversaries with a weapon which they used, after their manner, among the rebels of the border States and their sympathizers in the North. Nevertheless, surveying the whole transaction after a lapse of twenty-five years, it is not easy to see how any

CHAP. VIII. act of his in relation to it is lacking in wisdom, or how it could have been changed for the better. Certainly every step of the proceeding was marked with his usual unselfish sincerity and magnanimity to friend and to foe.

CHAPTER IX

THE JAQUESS-GILMORE MISSION

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July, 1864.

IF the result of Mr. Greeley's Niagara efforts left any doubt that peace was at present unattainable, the fact was demonstrated beyond question by the result, and published report, of another unofficial and volunteer negotiation which was proceeding at the same time. The war had brought into the Western army James F. Jaquess, D. D., a Methodist clergyman from the State of Illinois, whom Governor Yates had commissioned to raise and lead to the field the 73d Regiment of Illinois Volunteers. With some force of character and practical talent, his piety and religious enthusiasm touched that point of development which causes men to be classed as fanatics or prophets as success or failure waits on the unusual efforts to which they sometimes dedicate themselves. In May, 1863, Colonel Jaquess wrote to General James A. Garfield, then chief-of-staff to General Rosecrans, in whose army Jaquess was serving, as follows :

It is a well-known fact that the Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States was divided on the very questions which have divided the nation before the Southern States seceded. It is also known that the Methodist

CHAP. IX. Episcopal Church South was a leading element in the rebellion of the Southern States, and has been a prominent power in the prosecution of the war. A considerable part of the territory occupied by the Methodist Episcopal Church South, at the time of the separation and up to recent date, is now in the possession of our (the Union) army. This brings a large number of ministers and people of that communion within our lines. Some of these were prominent in the rebellion that separated the church, and were most bitter and uncompromising on the questions of difference. From these I have learned, in person, the following facts: That they consider the rebellion has killed the Methodist Episcopal Church South; that it has virtually obliterated slavery, and all the prominent questions of difference between the North and the South; that they are desirous of returning to the "old church" (Methodist Episcopal); that their brethren of the South are most heartily tired of the Rebellion; and that they most ardently desire peace, and the privilege of returning to their allegiance to church and state, and that they will do this on the first offer coming from a reliable source. My attention has been called to these facts, and others of a like character, frequently, of late, and from these considerations, but not from these alone, but because God has laid the duty upon me, I submit to the proper authorities the following proposition, viz: *I will go into the Southern Confederacy and return within NINETY DAYS with terms of peace that the Government will accept.*

N. B.— I propose *no compromise* with traitors—but their immediate return to allegiance to God and their country. It is no part of my business to discuss the probability or the possibility of the accomplishment of this work. I propose to do it in the name of the Lord; if he puts it into the hearts of my superiors to allow me to do it, I shall be thankful; if not, I have discharged my duty.

Jaquess
to Garfield,
May 19,
1863. MS.

General Rosecrans forwarded this letter to President Lincoln, earnestly approving and seconding the application of Colonel Jacquess. "I do not anticipate the results that he seems to expect," he

wrote; "but believe a moral force will be generated by his mission that will more than compensate us for his temporary absence from his regiment." To the request thus indorsed Mr. Lincoln made the following reply: "I have but a slight personal acquaintance with Colonel Jaquess, though I know him very well by character. Such a mission as he proposes I think promises good, if it were free from difficulties, which I fear it can not be. First, he can not go with any Government authority whatever. This is absolute and imperative. Secondly, if he goes without authority he takes a great deal of personal risk—he may be condemned and executed as a spy. If, for any reason, you think fit to give Colonel Jaquess a furlough, and any authority from me for that object is necessary, you hereby have it for any length of time you see fit."

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Rosecrans
to Lincoln,
May 21,
1863. MS.

Lincoln to
Rosecrans,
May 28,
1863. MS.

General Rosecrans issued the required furlough; but Colonel Jaquess soon found that this alone would not serve his purpose. Instead of trusting to church influence he at once addressed himself to the ordinary military channels for communicating with the South. He went to Baltimore and asked permission to go by way of Fort Monroe to Richmond. Under date of July 13 General Schenck telegraphed to the President: "Colonel James F. Jaquess, 73d Illinois Infantry, is here from the Army of the Cumberland. He desires me to send him to Fort Monroe. Shall I do so? He says you understand." To this Mr. Lincoln replied: "Mr. Jaquess is a very worthy gentleman, but I can have nothing to do, directly or indirectly, with the matter he has in view."

Schenck to
Lincoln,
July 13,
1863. MS.

Lincoln to
Schenck,
July 14,
1863. MS.

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We may suppose that the colonel persuaded General Schenck to send him to Fort Monroe, and that he also prevailed upon the officers conducting exchanges of prisoners to further allow him to proceed from there through the military lines on some pretext. At all events, in eleven days Colonel Jaquess was back in Baltimore, from which place he wrote the President the following absurd letter: "I have obtained valuable information and proposals for peace through the channel I proposed. Unofficial, but from men of character and great influence in the South, residents there. Would it be consistent for me to communicate them to you? If so, how? By telegraph, mail, or in person? Latter greatly preferred, if thought proper. I am moving strictly private. I await your answer at Barnum's."

Jaquess
to Lincoln,
July 22,
1863. MS.

But Mr. Lincoln did not need any further report from Colonel Jaquess. To his quick eye this brief letter told all the writer intended to communicate, and much more which his blinded enthusiasm could not comprehend. Admitting that he had actually been within the rebel lines, it was preposterous to suppose that in the brief space of a single week he could have gathered any considerable information concerning public sentiment; and the vague intimations of half a dozen private individuals in Richmond were worthless as exponents of the political will of the States in rebellion. Of what value were these unavowed, unofficial suggestions, when Lee's army, directed by the unyielding military dictatorship of Jefferson Davis, had with difficulty just been driven out of Pennsylvania, and was still hovering between Washington and Richmond?

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1864.Ante,
p. 192.

Mr. Lincoln could listen to none but official proposals, and not to official proposals merely but to such only as came "by and with an authority that can control the armies now at war against the United States," as he stated a year later in his announcement, "To whom it may concern," which is quoted elsewhere. He had just refused to permit the Vice-President of the Confederacy to come within the Union lines because he would not avow the object of his visit. All these things were simply a part of the continually repeated diplomatic ruse to get from the Government an acknowledgment of the official and independent status of the Confederacy, wherewith to strengthen their claims to European recognition. While combating the open contumacy of the Vallandigham Democrats in Ohio and suppressing the draft riots in New York, the President could not make himself a party to the well-meant but dangerous petty intrigue. Colonel Jaquess was left strictly to his own course, and after waiting at Baltimore till his patience was exhausted, he returned to his regiment in the West to do better service as a soldier than as a diplomat; meanwhile nursing his hobby for a more opportune occasion, and apparently not communicating to Generals Rosecrans and Garfield, who had honored him with their confidence, the "valuable" information and "unofficial" "proposals for peace" which, in his note to the President he claimed to have received; or if he did, these officers did not consider them of sufficient importance to bring them to the President's attention.

Jaquess's verbal report to some of his personal friends was more rose-colored. He gave out that

CHAP. IX. through the mysterious fellowship and brotherhood of the church he had met and conversed with high officers and prominent personages in the rebel armies and Southern society, and had learned from them to his own satisfaction that the South was tired of the war and reconciled to the loss of slavery; but that their sense of general responsibility and loyalty to the rebel cause and Government would not permit them to initiate movements for peace even by intimation. Like all enthusiasts, he was simply strengthened in his zeal by his failure; and about a year afterwards he resolved to repeat his visit and effort. He had from the first enlisted the sympathy and aid of J. R. Gilmore, a lecturer and writer under the *nom de plume* of "Edmund Kirke," who had spent much time in the Western armies, to smooth his way through the obstacles of military and official routine.

1864. President Lincoln saw clearly enough the futility of all such projected negotiations. But he also understood the necessity of silencing clamors for peace. He therefore again gave Jaquess leave of absence, and to both permission to pass the lines;¹ refusing, however, all authority, instruction, or any promise of protection. He would not even give the colonel a personal interview.

In studying this unofficial peace mission as a phenomenon of popular thought it will not be un-

¹ "Mr. Lincoln gave me a pass. It reads as follows: 'Allow J. R. Gilmore and friend to pass, with ordinary baggage, to General Grant at his headquarters.

"A. LINCOLN."
"He also gave me a note to General Grant, that read as fol-

lows: 'Will General Grant allow J. R. Gilmore and friend to pass our lines with ordinary baggage and go South.—A. LINCOLN.'"

—J. R. Gilmore, reply to Benjamin's letter to Mason, printed in "New York Tribune," Sept. 5, 1864.

interesting to compare the feeling and theory under which it originated with the feeling and theory under which it submitted its volunteer proposals to the rebel authorities. In his letter to Garfield of May 19, 1863, Colonel Jaquess said: "I propose no compromise with traitors, but their immediate return to allegiance to God and their country." So also Mr. Gilmore, forwarding the application for Colonel Jaquess's second visit, wrote under date of June 15, 1864, "I suppose he [Jaquess] comes to see me to know what terms he can offer those people. Of course we have none to offer; only to say: 'Lay down your arms, and go back to peaceful pursuits. The Emancipation Proclamation tells what we will do for the blacks; the amnesty proclamation, what we will do for the mass of whites. We can make no terms with rebels.' This is, I know, all that you can say; but Jaquess will have to deal with the leaders, and, of course, they have some affection for their own necks. Suppose I say to him: 'Tell the big devils we want no blood. The country feels no enmity and will seek no revenge; it will only seek its own safety. Its safety requires that they shall no longer remain in it, to foster feuds and incite rebellion. Therefore, they must leave. They can sell no lands or houses; no conveyance of that sort will be recognized; but if they need to raise means to pay their passage across the Atlantic by the disposal of their personal property, the Government will not interfere with it. But at the end of sixty days not one of them must be found within the limits of the United States. If they are, the laws made for traitors will be applied to them.'"

Gilmore
to Lincoln,
June 15,
1864. MS.

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At the last moment Gilmore determined to accompany Jaquess to Richmond. Their short journey was uneventful. On the 16th of July, 1864, at nine o'clock in the morning, they shook hands with General Butler at one of the Union outposts on the James River, and trusting to a flag of truce were lucky enough to find themselves at ten o'clock that night under close surveillance in one of the rooms of the Spotswood Hotel in the rebel capital. Next morning, Sunday, July 17, 1864, they addressed a note to the Confederate Secretary of State, Benjamin, asking an interview with "President Davis." "They visit Richmond," they wrote, "only as private citizens, and have no official character or authority; but they are acquainted with the views of the United States Government, and with the sentiments of the Northern people, relative to an adjustment of the differences existing between the North and the South, and earnestly hope that a free interchange of views between President Davis and themselves may open the way to such official negotiations as will result in restoring peace to the two sections of our distracted country."

"Atlantic Monthly,"
Sept., 1864.
p. 376.

Upon this they were invited to Mr. Benjamin's office and thoroughly cross-questioned to ascertain whether Mr. Lincoln in any way authorized their coming; to which they replied emphatically and truthfully in the negative. Finally the desired interview was arranged; and at nine o'clock that night Jefferson Davis and Mr. Benjamin, his Secretary of State, gave them an audience in the same room. The self-constituted envoys reported on their return that Mr. Davis received them politely,

and favored them with a two hours' discussion. Only so much of their report need be quoted as indicates the plan of adjustment which their imagination had devised, and which was as visionary as might be expected from the joint effort of a preacher and a novelist. It is hardly necessary to repeat that Mr. Lincoln had not thought of nor hinted at any such scheme to Mr. Gilmore, and that he would not and could not have accepted it, even if it had been agreed to or offered by the rebels. The essential part of the discussion is thus stated:

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July 17, 1864.

ENVOYS.— . . . If I understand you, the dispute between your Government and ours is narrowed down to this: Union or Disunion.

DAVIS.—Yes; or, to put it in other words, independence or subjugation.

ENVOYS.— . . . Suppose the two Governments should agree to something like this: To go to the people with two propositions; say peace with disunion and Southern independence as your proposition—and peace with Union, emancipation, no confiscation, and universal amnesty as ours. Let the citizens of all the United States (as they existed before the war) vote "yes" or "no" on these two propositions, at a special election within sixty days. If a majority votes disunion, our Government to be bound by it, and to let you go in peace. If a majority votes Union, yours to be bound by it and to stay in peace. The two Governments can contract in this way, and the people, though constitutionally unable to decide on peace or war, can elect which of the two propositions shall govern their rulers. Let Lee and Grant, meanwhile, agree to an armistice. This would sheathe the sword; and if once sheathed, it would never again be drawn by this generation.

DAVIS.—The plan is altogether impracticable. If the South were only one State, it might work; but as it is, if one Southern State objected to emancipation, it would

CHAP. IX. nullify the whole thing; for you are aware the people of Virginia cannot vote slavery out of South Carolina, nor the people of South Carolina vote it out of Virginia.

July 17, 1864. ENVOYS.—But three-fourths of the States can amend the Constitution. Let it be done in that way, in any way, so that it be done by the people. I am not a statesman or a politician, and I do not know just how such a plan could be carried out; but you get the idea that the people shall decide the question.

DAVIS.—That the *majority* shall decide it, you mean. We seceded to rid ourselves of the rule of the majority, and this would subject us to it again.

ENVOYS.—But the majority must rule finally, either with bullets or ballots.

DAVIS.—I am not so sure of that. Neither current events nor history shows that the majority rules, or ever did rule. The contrary, I think, is true. Why, sir, the man who should go before the Southern people with such a proposition, with *any* proposition which implied that the North was to have a voice in determining the domestic relations of the South, could not live here a day. He would be hanged to the first tree, without judge or jury.

ENVOYS.—But, seriously, sir, you let the majority rule in a single State; why not let it rule in the whole country?

DAVIS.—Because the States are independent and sovereign. The country is not. It is only a confederation of States; or rather it was. It is now two confederations.

BENJAMIN.—But tell me, are the terms you have named — emancipation, no confiscation, and universal amnesty — the terms which Mr. Lincoln authorized you to offer us?

ENVOYS.—No, sir; Mr. Lincoln did not authorize me to offer you any terms. But I think both he and the Northern people, for the sake of peace, would assent to some such conditions.

DAVIS.— . . . But amnesty, sir, applies to criminals. We have committed no crime. Confiscation is of no account unless you can enforce it. And emancipation! You have already emancipated nearly two millions of our slaves; and if you will take care of them, you may

CHAP. IX.

emancipate the rest. I had a few when the war began. I was of some use to them; they never were of any to me. Against their will you "emancipated" them, and you may "emancipate" every negro in the Confederacy, but *we will be free*. We will govern ourselves. We *will* do it, if we have to see every Southern plantation sacked, and every Southern city in flames. . . Say to Mr. Lincoln from me that I shall at any time be pleased to receive proposals for peace on the basis of our independence. It will be useless to approach me with any other.

July, 1864.

The envoys were as fortunate in getting quickly out of the rebel lines as they had been in getting in; and soon after their return, Mr. Gilmore published a long account of the interview, from which the foregoing extracts are made: That it was substantially correct is shown by comparing it with the account written out and sent to the diplomatic agents of the Confederacy in Europe by Mr. Benjamin.¹

"Atlantic
Monthly,"
Sept. 1864.

¹ "The President came to my office at 9 o'clock in the evening, and Colonel Ould came a few moments later with Messrs. Jaquess and Gilmore. The President said to them that he had heard, from me, that they came as messengers of peace from Mr. Lincoln; that as such they were welcome; that the Confederacy had never concealed its desire for peace, and that he was ready to hear whatever they had to offer on that subject.

"Mr. Gilmore then addressed the President, and in a few minutes had conveyed the information that these two gentlemen had come to Richmond impressed with the idea that this Government would accept a peace on the basis of a reconstruction of the Union, the abolition of slavery, and the grant of an amnesty to the people of the States as re-

pentant criminals. In order to accomplish the abolition of slavery, it was proposed that there should be a general vote of all the people of both federations, in mass, and the majority of the vote thus taken was to determine that as well as all other disputed questions. These were stated to be Mr. Lincoln's views. The President answered that as these proposals had been prefaced by the remark that the people of the North were a majority, and that a majority ought to govern, the offer was, in effect, a proposal that the Confederate States should surrender at discretion, admit that they had been wrong from the beginning of the contest, submit to the mercy of their enemies, and avow themselves to be in need of pardon for crimes; that extermination was preferable to such dishonor.

CHAP. IX.

He makes an issue of veracity on a minor point, alleging that Mr. Gilmore and Colonel Jaquess stated they came with the knowledge and at the desire of President Lincoln,¹ and were prepared to make proposals by his authority — an allegation directly contradicted by their letter asking the interview. But on the question of terms of adjustment, there is no material variance as to what was proposed on the one hand or declared on the other. Jefferson Davis haughtily charges the envoys with impudence and ignorance, but admits in the same breath that he condescendingly explained to them his views of their proposal and the nature and powers of the Confederate Government.

Davis,
"Rise and
Fall of the
Con-
federate
Govern-
ment,"
Vol. II.,
pp. 610, 611.

"He stated that if they were themselves so unacquainted with the form of their own Government as to make such propositions, Mr. Lincoln ought to have known when giving them his views that it was out of the power of the Confederate Government to act on the subject of the domestic institutions of the several States, each State having exclusive jurisdiction on that point; still less to commit the decision of such a question to the vote of a foreign people; that the separation of the States was an accomplished fact; that he had no authority to receive proposals for negotiations except by virtue of his office as President of an independent Confederacy, and on this basis alone must proposals be made to him.

"At one period of the conversation, Mr. Gilmore made use of some language referring to these States as 'rebels,' while rendering an account of Mr. Lincoln's views, and apologized for the

word. The President desired him to proceed, that no offense was taken, and that he wished Mr. Lincoln's language to be repeated to him as exactly as possible. Some further conversation took place, substantially to the same effect as the foregoing, when the President rose to indicate that the interview was at an end. The two gentlemen were then re-committed to the charge of Colonel Ould, and left Richmond the next day."— Benjamin to Mason, Commissioner to the Continent, Aug. 25, 1864; Richmond "Daily Dispatch," Aug. 26, 1864.

¹ Mr. Gilmore at once denied the charge in a published card ("New York Tribune," September 5, 1864). Jefferson Davis's version in his "Rise and Fall of the Confederate Government," Vol. II., p. 610, while it corroborates both Mr. Gilmore and Mr. Benjamin as to the terms discussed, does not repeat Mr. Benjamin's allegation on this point.

On the whole this volunteer embassy was of service to the Union cause. In the pending Presidential campaign the mouths of the peace factionists were to a great extent stopped by the renewed declaration of the chief rebel that he would fight for separation to the bitter end.

The peace negotiations at Niagara Falls and at Richmond, which in a fragmentary way were immediately noticed and commented upon by the newspapers, met a quick and sensitive public interest, and directed special inquiry to President Lincoln himself. Every one whose political or personal standing warranted it was desirous of ascertaining the truth at first hand. How the President felt and talked upon this topic is best shown by a letter written to a personal friend in New York at the time.

1864.

"I feel that the subject which you pressed upon my attention in our recent conversation is an important one. The men of the South recently (and perhaps still) at Niagara Falls tell us distinctly that they *are* in the confidential employment of the Rebellion; and they tell us as distinctly that they are *not* empowered to offer terms of peace. Does any one doubt that what they *are* empowered to do, is to assist in selecting and arranging a candidate, and a platform for the Chicago Convention? Who could have given them this confidential employment, but he who, only a week since, declared to Jaquess and Gilmore, that he had no terms of peace but the independence of the South — the dissolution of the Union. Thus, the present Presidential contest will almost certainly be no other than a contest between a union and a disunion candidate, disunion certainly following the success of

CHAP. IX.

Lincoln to
Abram
Wakeman,
July 25,
1864. MS.

the latter. The issue is a mighty one, for all people, and all times; and whoever aids the right will be appreciated and remembered."

This letter, written to a Republican politician, needed no argument to enforce its conclusions; but there was another class of questioners who, in the new and rapid development of war and politics, came to the President with more searching and far-reaching inquiries. Thus the editor of a war-Democratic newspaper in Wisconsin wrote to say that he had hitherto sustained the President's emancipation policy on the argument that it deprived the South of its laborers and thus undermined the strength of rebellion. "The Niagara Falls 'peace' movement," he continued, "was of no importance whatever, except that it resulted in bringing out your declaration, as we understand it, that no steps can be taken towards peace from any quarter, unless accompanied with an abandonment of slavery. This puts the whole war question on a new basis, and takes us war Democrats clear off our feet, leaving us no ground to stand upon. If we sustain the war and war policy, does it not demand the changing of our party politics? I venture to write you this letter, then, not for the purpose of finding fault with your policy—for that you have a right to fix upon without consulting any of us—but in the hope that you may suggest some interpretation of it, as well as make it tenable ground on which we war Democrats may stand—preserve our party consistency—support the Government—and continue to carry also to its support those large numbers of our old political friends who have stood by us up to this time."

Charles D.
Robinson
to Lincoln,
Aug. 7, 1864.

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1864.

In reply to him Mr. Lincoln drafted a letter of considerable length which, though apparently unfinished and probably never sent, is of the highest interest: "Your letter of the 7th was placed in my hand yesterday by Governor Randall. To me it seems plain that saying reunion and abandonment of slavery would be considered, if offered, is not saying that nothing *else* or *less* would be considered, if offered. But I will not stand upon the mere construction of language. It is true, as you remind me, that in the Greeley letter of 1862 I said: 'If I could save the Union without freeing any slave I would do it; and if I could save it by freeing all the slaves I would do it; and if I could save it by freeing some and leaving others alone I would also do that'; I continued in the same letter as follows: 'What I do about slavery and the colored race, I do because I believe it helps to save the Union; and what I forbear, I forbear because I do not believe it would help to save the Union. I shall do less whenever I shall believe what I am doing hurts the cause; and I shall do more whenever I shall believe doing more will help the cause.'

"All this I said in the utmost sincerity; and I am as true to the whole of it now, as when I first said it. When I afterwards proclaimed emancipation, and employed colored soldiers, I only followed the declaration just quoted from the Greeley letter that 'I shall do *more* whenever I shall believe *doing* more will help the cause.' The way these measures were to help the cause was not to be by magic, or miracles, but by inducing the colored people to come bodily over from the rebel side to ours. On this point, nearly a year ago, in a letter to Mr.

CHAP. IX. Conkling, made public at once, I wrote as follows :
Aug., 1864. 'But negroes, like other people, act upon motives. Why should they do anything for us if we will do nothing for them? If they stake their lives for us they must be prompted by the strongest motives—even the promise of freedom. And the promise being made, must be kept.' I am sure you will not, on due reflection, say that the promise being made must be broken at the first opportunity. I am sure you would not desire me to say, or to leave an inference, that I am ready, whenever convenient, to join in reënslaving those who shall have served us in consideration of our promise. As matter of morals, could such treachery by any possibility escape the curses of Heaven, or of any good man? As matter of policy, to *announce* such a purpose would ruin the Union cause itself. All recruiting of colored men would instantly cease, and all colored men now in our service would instantly desert us. And rightfully, too. Why should they give their lives for us, with full notice of our purpose to betray them? Drive back to the support of the Rebellion the physical force which the colored people now give and promise us, and neither the present, nor any coming administration, *can* save the Union. Take from us and give to the enemy the hundred and thirty, forty, or fifty thousand colored persons now serving us as soldiers, seamen, and laborers, and we cannot longer maintain the contest. The party who could elect a President on a War and Slavery Restoration platform would, of necessity, lose the colored force; and that force being lost, would be as powerless to save the Union as to do any other impossible thing.

“It is not a question of sentiment or taste, but one of physical force, which may be measured and estimated, as horse-power and steam-power are measured and estimated. And by measurement it is more than we can lose and live. Nor can we, by discarding it, get a white force in place of it. There is a witness in every white man’s bosom that he would rather go to the war having the negro to help him than to help the enemy against him. It is not the giving of one class for another—it is simply giving a large force to the enemy for nothing in return. In addition to what I have said, allow me to remind you that no one, having control of the rebel armies, or, in fact, having any influence whatever in the Rebellion, has offered, or intimated a willingness to a restoration of the Union, in any event, or on any condition whatever. Let it be constantly borne in mind that no such offer has been made or intimated. Shall we be weak enough to allow the enemy to distract us with an abstract question which he himself refuses to present as a practical one? In the Conkling letter before mentioned, I said: ‘Whenever you shall have conquered all resistance to the Union, if I shall urge you to continue fighting, it will be an apt time *then* to declare that you will not fight to free negroes.’ I repeat this now. If Jefferson Davis wishes for himself, or for the benefit of his friends at the North, to know what I would do if he were to offer peace and reunion, saying nothing about slavery, let him try me.”

CHAP. IX.

Lincoln to
Robinson,
Aug. 17,
1864. MS.

But the President was not yet at the end of his annoyances from this unreasonable and abnormal craving for peace negotiations which had infected

CHAP. IX. some individuals of otherwise cool judgment. The party anxiety of certain Republican leaders had at this juncture become unusually sensitive. The Democratic National Convention was about to meet in the city of Chicago, and the nomination of McClellan as its candidate was strongly foreshadowed. In anticipation, Democratic leaders, newspapers, and delegates were specially active and boastful. Their unwonted confidence and bold prophecies created general uneasiness among Republicans, and, in a few instances, produced a downright panic. Under this feeling the National Executive Committee of the Republican party met in New York for consultation, and on the 22d of August, its chairman, Henry J. Raymond, wrote the President the following extraordinary letter:

1864.

I feel compelled to drop you a line concerning the political condition of the country as it strikes me. I am in active correspondence with your stanchest friends in every State and from them all I hear but one report. The tide is setting strongly against us. Hon. E. B. Washburne writes that "were an election to be held now in Illinois we should be beaten." Mr. Cameron writes that Pennsylvania is against us. Governor Morton writes that nothing but the most strenuous efforts can carry Indiana. This State, according to the best information I can get, would go 50,000 against us to-morrow. And so of the rest. Nothing but the most resolute and decided action, on the part of the Government and its friends, can save the country from falling into hostile hands. Two special causes are assigned for this great reaction in public sentiment,—the want of military successes, and the impression in some minds, the fear and suspicion in others, that we are not to have peace in any event under this Administration until slavery is abandoned. In some way or other the suspicion is widely diffused that we can have peace with Union if we would. It is idle to reason with this belief—still more idle to denounce it. It can only

be expelled by some authoritative act, at once bold enough to fix attention and distinct enough to defy incredulity and challenge respect. CHAP. IX.

Why would it not be wise, under these circumstances, to appoint a commission, in due form, to make distinct proffers of peace to Davis, as the head of the rebel armies, on the sole condition of acknowledging the supremacy of the Constitution — all other questions to be settled in a convention of the people of all the States? The making of such an offer would require no armistice, no suspension of active war, no abandonment of positions, no sacrifice of consistency. If the proffer were accepted (which I presume it would not be), the country would never consent to place the practical execution of its details in any but loyal hands, and in those we should be safe. If it should be rejected (as it would be), it would plant seeds of disaffection in the South, dispel all the delusions about peace that prevail in the North, silence the clamors and damaging falsehoods of the opposition, take the wind completely out of the sails of the Chicago craft, reconcile public sentiment to the war, the draft, and the tax as inevitable necessities, and unite the North as nothing since the firing on Fort Sumter has hitherto done. I cannot conceive of any answer which Davis could give to such a proposition which would not strengthen you and the Union cause everywhere. Even your radical friends could not fail to applaud it when they should see the practical strength it would bring to the common cause.

I beg you to excuse the earnestness with which I have pressed this matter upon your attention. It seems to me calculated to do good—and incapable of doing harm. It will turn the tide of public sentiment and avert impending evils of the gravest character. It will arouse and concentrate the loyalty of the country and unless I am greatly mistaken give us an easy and a fruitful victory. Permit me to add that if done at all I think this should be done at once,—as your own spontaneous act. In advance of the Chicago Convention it might render the action of that body of very little consequence.

Raymond
to Lincoln,
Aug. 22,
1864. MS.

Three days later, Raymond and his committee, in obvious depression and panic, came to

CHAP. IX. Washington personally to urge these views upon the President. To any calm judgment, and in the light of Greeley's Niagara mission and Jaquess's Richmond mission and their results, the proposition of Raymond was entirely inadmissible. But Mr. Lincoln felt that this advice, coming from the chairman of the Executive National Committee of the political party of which he was the Presidential candidate, demanded patient hearing and respectful answer. He likewise resolved that if he were forced to such a step, he would, as he had done in the case of both Greeley and Jaquess, again make the proposer of the project the witness of its absurdity. To facilitate examination and discussion of the question, he therefore wrote with his own hand the following experimental draft of instructions, with which (to give point to his argument) he proposed to send Raymond to the rebel authorities:

“EXECUTIVE MANSION,
WASHINGTON, August 24, 1864.

“SIR: You will proceed forthwith and obtain, if possible, a conference for peace with Honorable Jefferson Davis, or any person by him authorized for that purpose. You will address him in entirely respectful terms, at all events, and in any that may be indispensable to secure the conference. At said conference you will propose, on behalf of this Government, that upon the restoration of the Union and the national authority, the war shall cease at once, all remaining questions to be left for adjustment by peaceful modes. If this be accepted, hostilities to cease at once. If it be not accepted, you will then request to be informed what terms, if any

embracing the restoration of the Union, would be accepted. If any such be presented you in answer, you will forthwith report the same to this Government, and await further instructions. If the presentation of any terms embracing the restoration of the Union be declined, you will then request to be informed what terms of peace would be accepted; and on receiving any answer, report the same to this Government, and await further instructions.”

CHAP. IX.

Lincoln,
Draft,
Autograph
MS.

A quotation from the private memoranda of an inmate of the Executive Mansion, made at the time, gives us the conclusion of the incident: “The President and the stronger half of the Cabinet, Seward, Stanton, and Fessenden, held a consultation with him [Raymond] and showed him that they had thoroughly considered and discussed the proposition of his letter of the 22d; and on giving him their reasons he very readily concurred with them in the opinion that to follow his plan of sending a commission to Richmond would be worse than losing the Presidential contest — it would be ignominiously surrendering it in advance. Nevertheless the visit of himself and committee here did great good. They found the President and Cabinet much better informed than themselves, and went home encouraged and cheered.” Events, political and military, which occurred and came to public knowledge very few days afterwards, silenced the preposterous clamor of “peace” fanatics; and the manuscript of Lincoln’s experimental letter thereafter slept undisturbed, in the envelope in which he placed it, for nearly a quarter of a century.

Aug., 1864.

J. G. N.,
Personal
Mem-
oranda.
MS.

CHAPTER X

MOBILE BAY

CHAP. X.

IT became evident, soon after the capture of New Orleans, that to give the desired efficiency to the blockade of the Gulf of Mexico it would be necessary for the navy to gain possession of Mobile Bay. However close a watch the Union fleet kept over the low and sandy shores of Alabama, it was impossible to prevent a good many vessels from slipping in, under cover of night or of fog, with their cargoes of necessities or luxuries from Europe, or from running out with their costly cotton bales. The trade was so lucrative as to justify the greatest risks. Not only munitions of war were thus brought in, but up to the last there was a keen demand for articles of taste and finery. It is true that the ladies of Alabama early in the contest learned their needed lesson of privation and self-denial. Their ingenuity, stimulated by the blockade, displayed itself in a thousand clever devices. They learned to make their own clothes from the products of the soil, with absolutely no intervention of the manufacturer; they spun, carded, and wove their cloth from the cotton or wool of their own plantations; every herb of the forest furnished them a dye stuff; they made buttons of dried

gourds or persimmon seeds; elegant fans were devised from the feathers of geese and peacocks; when kid and calf-skin became unattainable they made shoes of swine-skin. Many a Southern belle presented herself at church with innocent pride in raiment in which every detail was the work of her own hands; or entertained her visitors with a cup of tea made of the dried leaves of the holly or the blackberry, or coffee made of parched yam or of the seeds of the okra plant, sweetened with sugar of delicious flavor, obtained by boiling the juice of the watermelon. When coal oil failed they lighted their tea-tables with candles of tallow or beeswax, bleached in the shade of the trees as white as sperm; or with burning globes of the sweet-gum tree floating in bowls of lard.

CHAP. X.

Miss P. A.
Hague,
"A
Blockaded
Family,"
p. 102.

But human virtue and austerity have their limits; and when the rumor flew through the plantations of the Gulf States that a steamer from Liverpool or Havre had run the blockade with a cargo of prints and ribbons the young ladies were drawn to the nearest city as by an irresistible magnet. Scarce as money was, they would eagerly give twelve dollars a yard for the simplest calicoes, a hundred dollars for a plain straw hat, three hundred and seventy-five dollars for a pair of morocco shoes. A pound of genuine coffee cost seventy dollars; a pound of good tea commanded a price as uncertain as that of a Teniers at an auction. But these frivolities formed the least part of the cargoes of the blockade runners; they aided in keeping the Confederacy alive by the military stores they brought and the cotton they took away. During the latter part of the year 1863, and the

Ibid., p. 92.

CHAP. X.
1864.

beginning of the following year, it was the constant wish of the Government, and of Admiral Farragut as well, that the naval force in the Gulf should take possession of the harbor of Mobile. But the exigencies of the campaigns in the East and West for a long time prevented the detachment of an adequate land force to assist him; and as such an attack could not be successfully made without ironclads, the want of them still further delayed him.

It was no light undertaking. The city of Mobile stands at the head of the bay which stretches thirty miles northward from the Gulf of Mexico. At the Southern end it is fifteen miles in width, narrowing to six as it reaches the city. Throughout the greater part of its area the water is only twelve or fourteen feet deep with gently shelving shores; but there is a channel two and a half miles wide, running from the mouth of the bay six miles northward, in which the depth is from twenty to twenty-four feet. The main entrance was guarded by two low-lying sand-points, both strongly fortified: on the east Mobile point, a projection of the mainland, with Fort Morgan, and on the west Dauphin Island, one of the chain which separates Mississippi Sound from the Gulf, with Fort Gaines. There was a passage into the bay from the sound, by way of Grant's Pass, guarded by Fort Powell, but it was practicable only to vessels of light draft. The only way in for Farragut and his fleet was between the guns of Morgan and Gaines. There was not much to be feared from the latter fort, as it was more than two miles from the channel. A line of piles was planted along this



ADMIRAL FRANKLIN BUCHANAN.

COMMODORE JOSIAH TATTNALL.

entire distance, to force all vessels entering the harbor to pass directly under the guns of Fort Morgan. This was a work of great strength, and since its seizure by the Confederates they had thrown up in addition heavy exterior water batteries. The main fort carried forty guns, and the outer works seven more. The channel was thickly planted with torpedoes; a narrow gap was left for the convenience of blockade runners, its limit being marked with buoys.

Every student of the history of the Rebellion will be struck with the remarkable energy and ingenuity displayed in the South in supplying their war material. A state of war powerfully stimulates production and invention in every department of human activity. In the North there was a vast development of intelligent industry aided by unbounded resources and opportunities; the pressure of necessity in the South, acting upon minds of great natural aptitude, produced astonishing results in the way of invention, and in the adaptation of narrow means to important ends. Their deficiency in other means of harbor defense led them to devise and elaborate a system of torpedoes which proved terribly fatal to the National ships-of-war; and the ironclads, which in their poverty and isolation they improvised from the slender means at their disposal, were superior in strength and efficiency to anything the world had hitherto seen. Their blockade runners furnished them for a while with arms and ammunition from Europe; but as the blockade became more stringent they had to look to their own resources for such supplies, and so long as the war lasted they never failed, what-

CHAP. X. ever else was lacking, to have powder and ball sufficient for their needs.

"Southern
Historical
Society
Papers."
Vol. XVI.,
pp. 287 *et*
seq.

When their store of percussion caps threatened to give out, an ingenious mechanic from Lynchburg invented a machine which could fill and press a million caps a day. When the sheet copper in the country was exhausted, they made caps of all the turpentine and brandy stills that could be found in North Carolina. When, near the close of the war, the pinch of the blockade grew so tight that no mercury could be obtained from abroad, the Confederate chemists found they could make a fulminate for their caps with chlorate of potash and sulphuret of antimony. The Tredegar works cast excellent light cannon. After the precious niter beds of Tennessee were lost by the advance of the Northern army, artificial beds were formed all over the Confederacy. The large arsenal at Augusta, Georgia, was devoted to the manufacture of gunpowder; and up to the final catastrophe it supplied all that was wanted, of the best quality. When Richmond fell, a large quantity of this powder was destroyed by the panic-stricken officers of the Confederacy, with consequences more disastrous to their capital than all it had suffered from their enemies up to that time.

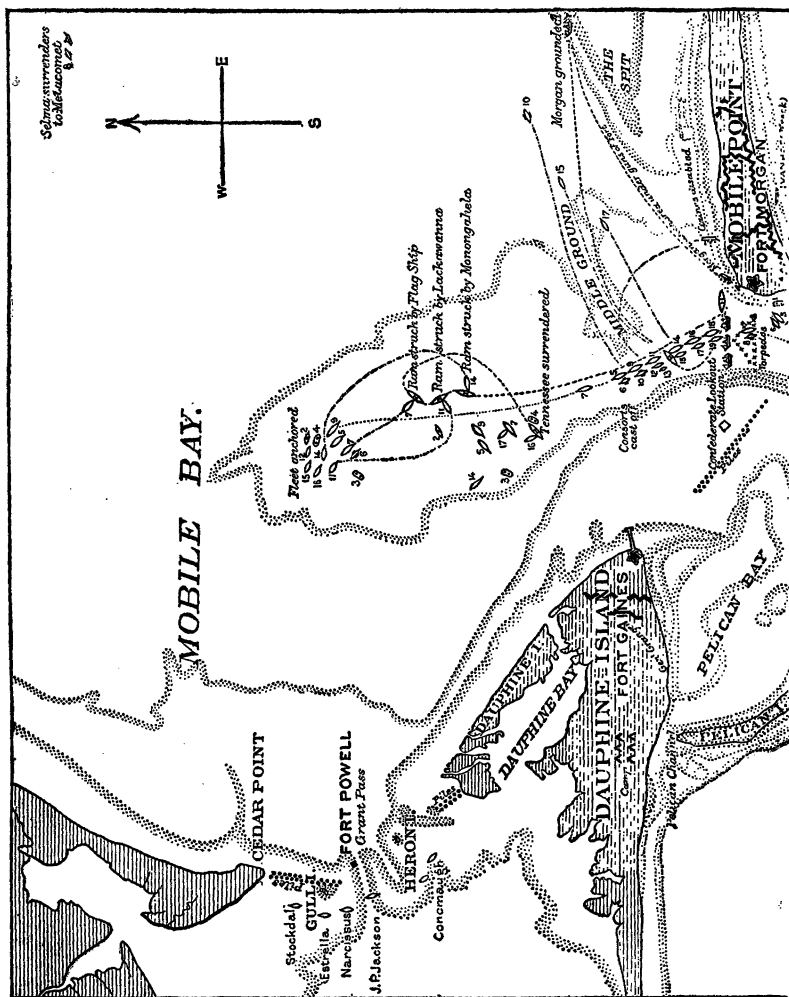
1863.

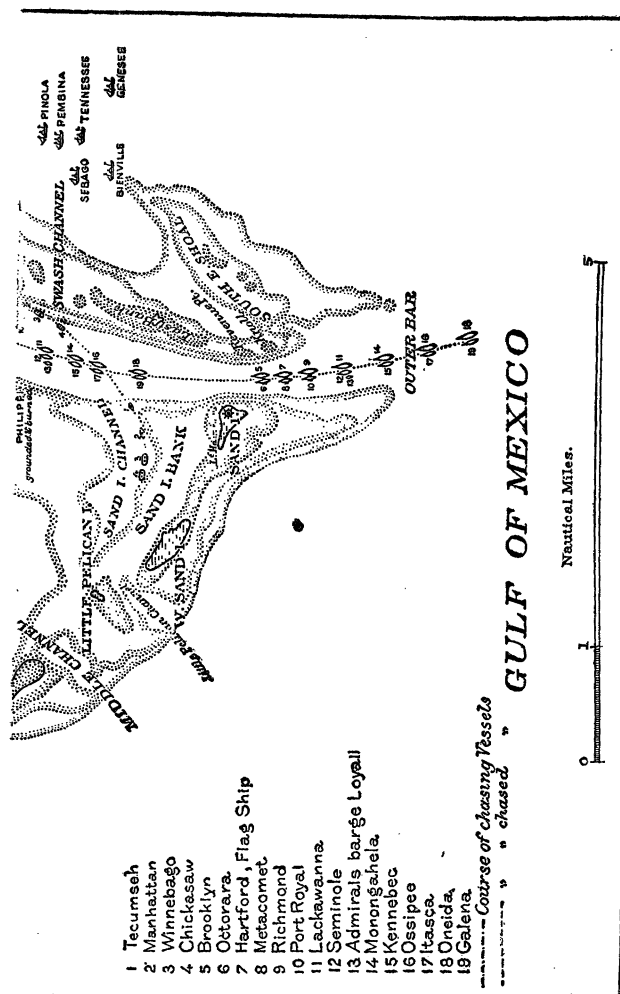
From time to time during the preceding year, Farragut had heard reports of the building and equipment of the ram *Tennessee*, which promised to be the most formidable vessel ever constructed by the Confederacy, and which really turned out to be one of the most effective craft for harbor defense ever built. He was especially anxious to make his attack early in the season before this much-heralded

monster should make her appearance in the lower bay. But the spring passed away before his reënforcements joined him, and the *Tennessee*, which had been launched in the winter at Selma, and towed one hundred and fifty miles to Mobile, there received her plating which had been sent to meet her from the rolling mills of Atlanta, and in March was ready for service and took on as her commander J. D. Johnston. Eight miles below Mobile is a series of mud flats stretching across the bay and called Dog River Bar. The draft of the *Tennessee* was too great to pass this obstruction and Farragut, hearing where she was, chafed against his enforced inaction, while the Confederates prepared the "camels" to float her over the bar, an operation which required two months. On the 18th of May she crossed safely over and anchored in the waters of the lower bay. It was the intention of the Confederates to sally out of the pass and attack Farragut in his wooden ships, but the ram proved unexpectedly slow and unwieldy and it was resolved to keep inside and use her for the defense of the harbor. Besides her own commander she had on board the admiral of the Confederate navy, Franklin Buchanan, the same accomplished officer who had fought the *Merrimac* with such skill and bravery.

1864.

In spite of her slowness — due to the fact that her machinery was not made for her but taken from a light-draft river steamer — she was still a vessel of considerable importance. Her length on deck was 209 feet; her beam 48 feet; with her armament on board she drew 14 feet. A little over two-thirds of her deck space was occupied





NOTE: The *Tecumseh*, the leading monitor, moved from the position shown on the map under Fort Morgan, to the left toward the right of the line marked "Torpedoes," where she was blown up. The distance traversed by the *Metacombet*, after casting off from the *Hartford* and until she came up with the *Selma*, is estimated by Admiral Jouett at nine miles. The time of the edge

CHAP. X.

by a casemate, protecting her battery. The hull was strongly built of oak and yellow pine; the sides were protected by an overhang covered with four inches of wrought iron which extended six feet below the water line. The deck was armored with wrought iron plates two inches thick. The casemate was very strong; the sides and ends were inclined at an angle of forty-five degrees, built of heavy yellow pine beams, a vertical and a horizontal layer, and outside of that a layer of four inches of oak to which the iron plating was secured, six inches forward, and five inches abaft, and on the sides. It was covered on top with wrought iron gratings. She carried six Brooke rifled guns firing 95 and 100 pound shot. About two feet under water projected a strong iron beak formed by a continuation of the knuckle of the overhang. In addition to the *Tennessee*, the harbor was defended by three gunboats, the *Selma*, the *Gaines*, and the *Morgan*.

1864.

Midsummer came and passed before Farragut got the troops and ironclads which were necessary for his attack; but on the 4th of August, General Gordon Granger landed with some 5000 troops on Dauphin Island, in rear of Fort Gaines, and the same evening the *Tecumseh*, the last of the eagerly expected ironclads, reported to Farragut outside the harbor. The attack, which was to have been made on the 4th, was therefore postponed till the next day — a fortunate circumstance, as in the meanwhile the Confederates threw into Fort Gaines a large reënforcement of men and arms, which only swelled the trophies of the victory. It rained hard on the evening of the 4th, and Farragut waited

Farragut
to Welles,
Report
Secretary
of the Navy
for 1864,
p. 400.

with intense expectation to see what sort of weather would follow the shower. He needed a flood-tide to carry in his ships and a westerly wind to blow his smoke towards the fort. At midnight the rain ceased and for a few hours the sky was clear and the ocean calm. The night was sultry and Farragut slept ill; at three o'clock he sent his steward to inquire how the wind was. On learning it blew from the southwest he at once gave orders to go in. The vessels were lashed together two and two, the lighter ones on the side away from the fort, so that if one were crippled her consort might tow her in; if both were disabled, the flood-tide was relied upon to perform this office. The four monitors took their positions between the wooden ships and Fort Morgan; their double duty was to keep down the fire of the fort, and to be ready to attack the *Tennessee* as soon as the harbor was entered.

The *Brooklyn*, under Captain James Alden, with her mate the *Octorara*, led the column, the admiral following in the *Hartford*, Captain Percival Drayton, attended by the *Metacomet*. To this arrangement Farragut yielded only at the urgent request of his commanders; he insisted that exposure was one of the penalties of rank and ought not to be avoided; he finally consented to let the *Brooklyn* precede him only on the plea that she was better provided with chase-guns and had an ingenious contrivance for picking up torpedoes. But destiny sided with him at last, and he was to enter the harbor after all with his broad blue pennant flying in the van of the fleet. The leading vessels crossed the bar at ten minutes past six; the line

CHAP. X.

Aug. 5, 1864.

Mahan,
"The Gulf
and Inland
Waters,"
p. 230.Farragut
to Welles,
Report
Secretary
of the
Navy for
1864, p. 401.

CHAP. X. of battle was rapidly formed, and the stately procession of ships moved forward. The *Tecumseh*,
Aug. 5, 1864. under the gallant Tunis A. M. Craven, led the way a little in advance and to the right of the line; she fired the opening shots of the battle at Fort Morgan, a little before seven o'clock, and then moved steadily on to attack the *Tennessee*. Intent upon the enemy in his front, Craven gave no thought to the deadlier invisible dangers under his keel. He was pushing straight upon the ram when a torpedo exploded directly beneath him; the *Tecumseh* lurched violently, careened, and sunk almost in a moment. Craven, in the pilot house, felt the shock, and knew its fatal significance. He and the pilot rushed for the little door communicating with the deck; there was not room for two to pass. The instinct of the chivalrous gentleman asserted itself above the dread of death or the feeling of rank. "After you, pilot," he said. The pilot escaped and Craven went down with his ship.

Alden to
Farragut,
Report
Secretary
of the
Navy
for 1864,
p. 422.

Captain Alden, in the *Brooklyn*, was about three hundred yards behind the *Tecumseh* when he witnessed her destruction. A moment after, shoal water was reported, and he observed a line of buoys which indicated torpedoes directly under his bows. He backed to avoid them, and thus came down upon the flagship next astern. Farragut hailed and asked what was the matter; Alden reported torpedoes ahead; but the admiral, to whom this was a danger already foreseen and provided for, and who saw there was greater danger in delaying under the guns of Morgan than in pushing forward, now determined to take the lead and ordered

Alden to follow him. A boat was sent out from the *Metacomet* to pick up the survivors of the *Tecumseh*, who were struggling in the water under a heavy fire from the land batteries, and twenty-one were saved; over a hundred were drowned.

CHAP. X.

Mahan,
"The Gulf
and Inland
Waters,"
pp. 233, 234.

The flagship moved to the westward of the *Brooklyn* and thus passed through the line of torpedoes; providentially none of them exploded, though the cases were heard knocking against the vessel and the primers snapping. It took some time for the *Brooklyn* to right herself and steam forward; meanwhile she and the *Richmond*, which was next in line, were engaged in a heavy interchange of shots with the fort, which wrapped the vessels, the channel, and the beach in dense clouds of smoke. The battle had become general; the fort, Buchanan's little fleet, the Union ironclads, and the wooden ships all volleying together. On the flagship the admiral had ascended to the maintop, and thinking he might be wounded he had himself lashed to the mast, unconscious of the figure he would present hereafter in history and in art; on the deck an acting ensign, H. H. Brownell, was "taking notes," as the admiral said, "with coolness and accuracy," and at the same time composing to the tremendous obligato of tumultuous battle one of the finest poems which we owe to the war. While the ships were moving by, the fire of the fort was somewhat subdued by the incessant cannonade from the channel; but when the leading vessels were out of range, the guns of Morgan resumed their work and the belated vessels bringing up the rear suffered severely, the *Oneida* being shot through and disabled by a shell bursting in her boiler,

Aug. 5, 1864.

"The
Bay Fight."

CHAP. X. though her consort the *Galena* carried her safely away.

Aug. 5, 1864. After the admiral had passed the line of torpedoes the *Hartford* became hotly engaged with the Confederate fleet. The three smaller gunboats kept up a galling fire upon her as they retreated up the bay, doing great execution. They speedily disabled one of her bow guns and killed and wounded many of her crew. As the *Hartford* came abreast of the *Tennessee's* station the formidable ram dashed out upon her. The *Hartford*, however, was so far superior in speed and dexterity of handling that Buchanan, who was especially anxious to sink the flagship, could not reach her, and they parted company with an exchange of broadsides. After a brief pursuit, which was hopeless from the beginning, the *Tennessee* turned her attention to the rest of the fleet, and Farragut sent the *Metacomet* after the rebel gunboats. She chased them through a heavy squall, in mist and rain, into shallow water, and there, pursuing them into the soft ooze, drove the *Gaines*, which had been injured in the fight, to the shelter of the fort, where she was burned by the rebels, and engaged and captured the *Selma*; the *Morgan* got away under the guns of the fort, and in the night made her escape to Mobile.

The *Tennessee*, after leaving the *Hartford*, went down the line of the advancing fleet and engaged in a running fight, doing little damage, considering her strength and opportunities. She first aimed at the *Brooklyn*, but seeing the torpedo tackle on her bows and mistaking it for a torpedo she sheered off, firing two effective shots as she went by. She

next engaged the *Richmond*, doing no harm, and moved along the line, passing by the *Lackawanna*, colliding with the *Monongahela*, firing a damaging shot into the *Kennebec*, and giving the *Ossipee* two shots below the spar-deck. She had got now to the end of the line, where lay the crippled *Oneida*, apparently an easy prey. She gave her a raking shot, severely wounding Commander J. R. M. Mul-lany, and would have rammed and sunk her but for the intervention of the ironclad *Winnebago*. It was then about half-past eight, and although Buchanan had done surprisingly little injury in this rapid raid down the Union line, he had at least had a cheering and encouraging experience and had convinced himself of his own invulnerability in face of the wooden ships. He therefore ordered Johnston to turn and attack the Union fleet again. Farragut, thinking the battle was over until he should choose to renew it, ordered the fleet to anchor and the men to breakfast. But scarcely were they seated when the *Tennessee*, which had been turning her head northward, under the guns of the fort, was observed making directly for the flagship. Percival Drayton could at first hardly believe his eyes; the splendid temerity of the ram in attacking such odds was almost incredible. There were but a few minutes to prepare for her; her black mass swelled every instant upon the eye.

Orders were at once signaled to every available ship to attack the ram, not only with guns but bows on also; she must be destroyed, no matter what vessels were dashed to pieces against her iron sides. The *Monongahela* was first to strike her but lost her iron prow and cutwater

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Aug. 5, 1864.

Drayton to
Farragut,
Report
Secretary
of the Navy,
1864,
p. 407.

CHAP. X. by the blow, and could not avoid a deadly shot in the act; a shell passed through her berth deck, exploding and wounding an officer and two men. The *Monongahela* fired a broadside at ten yards, which rattled harmlessly off the side of the *Tennessee*. The *Lackawanna* struck her next at full speed, with far more damage to herself than to the ram, her stem being cut and crushed to the plank ends, with no effect upon the *Tennessee* except to give her a heavy list. The two vessels swung round till their port sides touched, and the *Lackawanna* fired a 9-inch gun, smashing one of the *Tennessee's* port shutters. The *Lackawanna* drew off to ram again, while the *Hartford*, coming on at full speed, struck the *Tennessee* a glancing blow, and poured in upon her an unavailing broadside, the ram replying for the last time. In the eagerness of the big ships to run down the ram they got in each other's way; the *Lackawanna* struck the *Hartford* near where Farragut was standing, cutting down the flagship to within two feet of the water's edge. The undaunted admiral, seeing his ship was not sinking, made ready for another rush, which fortunately was not needed.

The monitors had now approached, and begun their work. The *Manhattan*, with one gun disabled, struck the casemate of the *Tennessee* a terrible blow with a shot from her 15-inch gun, loaded with a double charge of sixty-five pounds of powder; it pierced the armor of the ram, not going through the wood, but leaving a hanging mass of oak and pine splinters on the inside. The *Chickasaw* got under the stern of the *Tennessee* and hung on like a bulldog, keeping up an obstinate fire with her

CHAP. X.

four 11-inch guns. A lucky shot severed the tiller chains of the *Tennessee*; her smoke-stack was shot away, and the smoke poured in suffocating volumes upon the gun deck. The monitors surrounded her, pouring in their relentless volleys, and the great ships were approaching again to run her down. Buchanan, however, was still full of pluck; he had no thought of giving up. He was fighting a battery himself, and called a machinist to put a jammed shutter to rights. A shot struck the side with such frightful force that the man flew into pieces like a glass vase, and Buchanan's leg was broken. Johnston — at 10 o'clock — went on deck and displayed the white flag. He was just in time; the *Ossipee* was upon him, coming at full speed; but her courteous commander, W. E. Le Roy, backed his vessel so that the boats came lightly together. Bowing with easy grace to his beaten enemy, as if they were passing each other on Pennsylvania Avenue, Le Roy shouted, "Hello! Johnston, old fellow; how are you?" — typifying, with this frank friendliness, the spirit in which all true men of the North wished the war to end.

The *Tennessee* was a noble prize, despite her injuries, which were such as could be easily repaired. She and her little consorts had fought all Farragut's fleet for over an hour — she had lost but two men killed and ten wounded. Farragut had lost, from the fire of the forts and of the Confederate squadron, leaving out those drowned in the *Tecumseh*, 52 killed and 170 wounded. The flagship was the principal sufferer in killed, though there were more men wounded on the *Brooklyn*.

The *Chickasaw*, the most efficient of the iron-

Farragut
to Welles,
Aug. 8, 1864.
Report
Secretary
of the
Navy,
1864, p. 463.

CHAP. X. clads, energetically continued the day's work. After towing the prize to her anchorage near the flagship, she steamed down to Fort Powell, taking the work in reverse, and bombarded it for an hour. When night came on the fort was evacuated and blown up. On the 7th, after a heavy shelling from the *Chickasaw*, Colonel C. D. Anderson, commanding Fort Gaines, surrendered with his entire garrison of over 800 men. These works being taken, and Grant's pass thus opened to the light-draft vessels, the control of the harbor and the supplies of the fleet were secured, even if Fort Morgan had held out indefinitely. In fact the only sensible course open to its commander, General R. L. Page, was to evacuate the place and save its garrison and as much of the material as possible. He was apparently incapable of so wise a resolution. He signaled Anderson to hold on at all hazards and bitterly blamed him for the surrender; and for his own part simply waited for Farragut and Granger to come and take him. This they did two weeks after Gaines surrendered. The fort was invested by the land forces, and by a battery sent ashore from the fleet; the bombardment began at daylight, on the 22d of August, from the shore batteries and from the naval force inside the bay and outside in the Gulf, and continued all day. At night the citadel took fire; early in the morning of the 23d an explosion was seen, and at half-past six the fort displayed the white flag. Terms of unconditional surrender were offered and accepted, and at two o'clock the Union forces took possession. Farragut then found, to his deep indignation, that most of the guns were spiked, and the stores de-

Report
Secretary
of the
Navy, 1864,
pp. 472, 473.

stroyed; that General Page and several of his officers had no swords to deliver up, while those that were surrendered were broken; an action which even the genial admiral characterized in his report as "childish spitefulness."

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Secretary
of the
Navy, 1864,
p. 473.

Aug., 1864.

The harbor was thus secured, the outer defenses of Mobile captured, 104 guns and about 1500 men taken, and the great Gulf port closed forever to Confederate commerce and war. The city itself was now of no more importance than an inland town, and amid the exigencies of the great campaigns that occupied the latter half of 1864 it was not thought advisable to detach the troops required for its capture. In March of the year 1865, at the opening of the final campaigns to which the Confederacy succumbed, General E. R. S. Canby moved with two corps against Mobile. It was then the headquarters of the department commanded by General Richard Taylor, General D. H. Maury being in immediate charge of the city and its defenses, with a force of some 15,000 men. The force brought against it by Canby was nearly twice as great; and the navy under Admiral Henry K. Thatcher of course made an overwhelming preponderance of strength. But the contest was not so unequal as it might seem; the city was strongly fortified on every side and defended also by a network of streams; the water of the bay was so shallow that ships of heavy draft could not easily come within shelling distance of the town, and was everywhere thickly planted with torpedoes.

Still, the forces controlled by Canby and Thatcher were sure, sooner or later, to take the place. It was determined to make the attack from the eastern side

CHAP. X. where the defenses seemed less formidable than on the west. The Thirteenth Corps, under Granger, with Grierson's cavalry, marched from Mobile Point around Bon Secours Bay; and General Steele, with a division of negro soldiers, was sent from Pensacola direct upon Fort Blakely, a formidable work near the mouth of the Blakely, the west branch of the Tensaw River. He met with little opposition except from Clanton's Alabama cavalry, which he defeated, capturing Clanton and 275 of his men, and arrived before Fort Blakely on the 29th of March, and there established the right of the Union line. A. J. Smith with the Sixteenth Corps came next, and the Thirteenth held the left. The right soon invested Fort Blakely; the left had already invested the so-called Spanish Fort some three miles further south. The navy moved up and crossed Dog River Bar and opened on the Rebel works with five ironclads and the double-ender *Octorara*. So thorough a search had been made for torpedoes that the navy felt comparatively safe; but their confidence was misplaced. The *Milwaukee* was sunk on the 28th, the *Osage* the next day; the light draft *Rodolph*, coming to raise the *Milwaukee*, was herself sunk the 1st of April; and at a later period, after the campaign was ended, four other vessels were lost by the same effective means.

1865.

On the evening of the 8th of April, the preparations having been completed, all the batteries from land and bay opened upon Spanish Fort, and a terrible fire was kept up until nearly midnight, when the guns of the fort were silenced, and the place being no longer tenable, the garrison in great



CAPTAIN TUNIS A. M. CRAVEN.

part escaped in the darkness. The Union troops entered the fort immediately and succeeded in capturing over six hundred prisoners and thirty heavy guns. As soon as the sun rose on the 9th — the sun whose rising saw Sheridan athwart Lee's front at Appomattox, and whose setting saw the Confederate banners furled forever in Virginia — preparations were promptly made for the final assault upon Fort Blakely, which was to close the war in Alabama.

CHAP. X.

Apr., 1865.

At half-past five in the afternoon, Steele ordered his forces to assault the fort. It was a strong work, surrounded with every obstacle which the Confederates had been able in a year's leisure to place before it; but the Union troops, flushed with success, went at it with such spirit that neither ditch, abatis, nor a storm of grape and canister could keep them out. The colored troops on the right of the line especially distinguished themselves by their courage and conduct in this final grapple with their former masters. At seven o'clock the Union forces were in possession of the work, with all the garrison, some three hundred prisoners, and a great store of guns, flags, and small arms. They lost heavily in killed and wounded — about a thousand, to the Confederates' five hundred.

Mobile was at the mercy of Canby and Thatcher, but three more days were required in which to complete the work. The fleet busied itself next day in clearing away torpedoes and working its way up abreast of the captured forts. The guns of Spanish Fort were now turned on Forts Huger and Tracy a little to the north, and the navy aid-

CHAP. X.
Apr., 1865.

ing, the Confederates were driven from them on the 11th and the blue-jackets took possession. Commander Pierce Crosby continued his work with the torpedoes, reaping a plentiful harvest: he lifted that day one hundred and fifty. When a safe path was opened, Commander James S. Palmer with the *Octorara* and the ironclads threaded his way through the Blakely and Tensaw rivers to within a mile of Mobile, where the fair city lay helpless beneath his guns. Admiral Thatcher about the same time went directly across the bay, with eight thousand troops under Gordon Granger, towards the city, which at once surrendered. The Confederate army and navy had fled up the Tombigbee river, having previously sunk the ironclads *Huntsville* and *Tuscaloosa*, which had passed all their inglorious lives at the wharf.

Commander Palmer was dispatched up the Tombigbee in pursuit of the flying Confederate navy; but the banks of that quiet stream were spared the spectacle of a naval battle. Commodore E. Farrand surrendered his fleet of one ironclad and four river steamers at Citronelle,¹ on the 4th of May, at the same time that General Taylor capitulated with his army. One hundred and twelve naval officers, two hundred and eighty-five enlisted men, and twenty-four marines were paroled—a proportion of epaulettes which showed how the Confederacy had gone to seed. A week before, the rebel navy in the Mississippi had come to a violent end. The ram *Webb*, which had gained a reputation in the West by the destruction of the

¹ The memorandum of surrender gives Sidney as the place, but the meeting was at Citronelle, according to all reports.

Indianola, was ready for sea when the final catastrophe came at Appomattox; she was loaded with cotton, rosin, and turpentine, and her officers determined to make a bold break for freedom and a market. She passed New Orleans in broad day on the 24th of April, flying the Union flag, and steaming rapidly down the river. She was recognized, a few ineffectual shots were fired at her, and four steamers started in pursuit. She had a good lead and might have escaped; but about twenty-five miles below the city she met the *Richmond* coming up-stream. This was her sentence of death. Her commander ran her ashore and set her afire; her inflammable cargo blazed up like tinder; her crew scrambled on shore and were captured.

CHAPTER XI

THE CHICAGO SURRENDER

CHAP. XI. **T**HE Democratic managers had called the National Convention of their party to meet on the Fourth of July, 1864; but after the nomination of Frémont at Cleveland and of Lincoln at Baltimore it was thought prudent to postpone it to a later date, in the hope that something in the chapter of accidents might arise to the advantage of the opposition. It appeared for a while as if this manœuvre were to be successful. As a vessel shows its finest sailing qualities against a head wind, so the best political work is always done in the face of severe opposition; and as the Republican party had as yet no enemy before it, the canvass, during its first months, seemed stricken with languor and apathy. The military situation was far from satisfactory. The terrible fighting in the Wilderness, succeeded by Grant's flank movement to the left, and the culmination of the campaign in the horrible slaughter at Cold Harbor, had profoundly shocked and depressed the country. The movement upon Petersburg, so far without decisive results, had contributed little of hope or encouragement; the campaign of Sherman in Georgia gave as yet no positive assurance of the brilliant result

it afterwards attained; the Confederate raid into Maryland and Pennsylvania, in July, was the cause of great annoyance and exasperation.

This untoward state of things in the field of military operations found its exact counterpart in the political campaign. Several circumstances contributed to divide and discourage the Administration party. The resignation of Mr. Chase, on the last day of June, had seemed, to not a few leading Republicans of the North, as a presage of disintegration in the Government; Mr. Greeley's mission at Niagara Falls, in spite of the wise and resolute attitude taken by the President in relation to peace negotiations, had unsettled and troubled the minds of many. The Democratic party, not having as yet appointed a candidate nor formulated a platform, were free to devote all their leisure to attacks upon the Administration; and the political fusillade continued with great energy through the summer months. The Republicans were everywhere on the defensive, having no objective point of attack in the opposite lines. The rebel emissaries in Canada, being in thorough concert with the leading peace men of the North, redoubled their efforts to disturb the public tranquillity, and not without success. Mr. Davis says of this period: "Political developments at the North . . . favored the adoption of some action that might influence popular sentiment in the hostile section. The aspect of the peace party was quite encouraging, and it seemed that the real issue to be decided in the Presidential election in that year was the continuance or cessation of the war." There is remarkable concurrence between this view of Mr. Davis and

CHAP. XI.

1864.

Davis,
"Rise
and Fall
of the Con-
federate
Govern-
ment."
Vol. II.,
p. 611.

CHAP. XI. that of Mr. Lincoln in a letter to a friend which we have quoted in another place. Referring to the emissaries at Niagara Falls and their interest in the Chicago Convention, and also to the expressions used by the Confederate authorities in their conversation with Jaquess, Mr. Lincoln said, "The present Presidential contest will almost certainly be no other than a contest between a Union and a Disunion candidate, disunion certainly following the success of the latter!"

Lincoln to
Wakeman,
July 25,
1864. MS.

Mr. Thompson, in his report of the operations of the rebel commission in Canada, claims that the results of the Niagara Falls conference were the source of such encouragement to the peace party as to lead them to give up their half-formed project of insurrection in the Northwest in the hope of defeating Lincoln at the polls. In the midst of these discouraging circumstances the manifesto of Wade and Davis appeared to add its depressing influence to the general gloom. It seemed for a time as if this action of two of the most prominent Republicans in either House of Congress would result in a serious defection from the Republican party, though in the end the effect of the demonstration proved inconsiderable.

General McClellan had before this time become the acknowledged leader of the Democratic party in the North. It is true he was not the favorite candidate of the Democracy in most of the Western States, but in the powerful States of the seaboard, and especially in the large cities, he was the only person indicated by popular consent among the opposition as the antagonist of Lincoln in the Presidential canvass. His attitude was therefore a

matter of grave preoccupation, not only to most of the leading Republicans, but even to the President himself. There have been, in the last twenty years, many conflicting stories in regard to the overtures made to him during this summer; but, so far as can be ascertained, they were all the voluntary acts of over-anxious friends of the President, and made without his knowledge or consent. As early as the month of June, 1863, Thurlow Weed conceived the idea that it would be of great advantage to the Union cause if General McClellan would take a prominent part in a great war meeting to be held in New York. With the knowledge and approval of the President he approached the general with this purpose; he even suggested to him that the result might be the organization of a movement to make him the Union candidate for the Presidency. We learn from Mr. Weed that General McClellan at first gave a favorable hearing to the proposition, but at the last moment withdrew his consent to preside at the meeting in a letter in which he said: "I am clear in the conviction that the policy governing the conduct of the war should be one looking not only to military success, but also to ultimate reunion, and that it should consequently be such as to preserve the rights of all Union-loving citizens, wherever they may be, as far as compatible with military necessity." The chance of identifying himself with the Union party thus passed away; later in the season he came out in favor of the candidates of the peace faction in Pennsylvania.

An attempt made in July, 1864, by Francis P. Blair, the elder, to induce McClellan to withdraw

T. W.
Barnes,
Memoir of
Thurlow
Weed.
Vol. II.,
p. 429.

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Letter of
F. P.
Blair, Sr.,
dated
Oct. 5, 1864,
in the
"National
Intelli-
gencer."

from the canvass caused a great deal of gossip at the time, and led to such misstatements and exaggerations that Mr. Blair afterwards published a full and detailed account of his action. This venerable gentleman, sharing in the apprehension entertained by many as to the divisions and consequent weakness of the Union party, went to New York in the latter part of July "to make an effort at conciliation." "I went on this errand," said Mr. Blair, "without consulting the President, without giving him, directly or indirectly, the slightest intimation of my object, and, of course, without his authority. I apprised no one but my son." He first called upon the leading editors of the city. Mr. Bryant, though discontented with the Administration, considered Mr. Lincoln, with all his abatements, the only man who could be relied upon for the defense of the Union. Mr. Greeley assured Mr. Blair that "his best efforts would not be wanting to secure the peace of the country and the reelection of the President"; Mr. Bennett of the "Herald" gave his ultimatum in a "raucous Scotch accent"—"Tell him to restore McClellan to the army and he will carry the election by default." Through S. L. M. Barlow, Mr. Blair had a long and intimate conversation with General McClellan. He began by stating distinctly to him that he had not come from Mr. Lincoln; that he had no authority or even consent from him to make representations or overtures of any sort. He then urged him, with the privilege of age and long friendship, to have nothing to do with the Chicago Convention, saying that if he accepted their nomination he would be defeated. He pictured to him the dismal fate that

awaits defeated candidates; he urged him to make himself the inspiring center and representative of the loyal Democrats of the North by writing a letter to Lincoln asking to be restored to service in the army, declaring at the same time that he did not seek it with a view to recommend himself to the Presidential nomination. "In case the President should refuse this request," said Mr. Blair, "he would then be responsible for the consequences."

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General McClellan received this well-meant advice in his customary manner. It is altogether probable that he did not believe a word of Mr. Blair's opening statement that this overture was without the approval or privity of the President. It no doubt seemed to him a political trick to induce him to decline the nomination of which he was already certain. He listened with his habitual courtesy and answered with his habitual indecision. He disclaimed any desire for the Presidential candidacy; he thanked Mr. Blair for his friendly suggestions; he said he would give them deep consideration; that he was called to the country to see a sick child and regretted that he could not talk with him again. Mr. Blair came back from his useless mission and repeated to Mr. Lincoln what he had done, adding that he thought it probable that General McClellan would write to him. The President "neither expressed approval nor disapprobation," says Mr. Blair in his letter, "but his manner was as courteous and kind as General McClellan's had been."

July, 1864.

The political situation grew darker throughout the summer. At last, towards the end of August, the

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CHAP. XI. general gloom and depression enveloped the President himself. The Democrats had not yet selected their candidate nor opened their campaign. As in the field of theology there is no militant virtue unless there is an active evil to oppose, so in that of politics a party without an organized opposition appears to drop to pieces by its own weight. To use Mr. Lincoln's words: "At this period we had no adversary and seemed to have no friends." For a moment he despaired of the success of the Union party in the coming election. He was not alone in this impression. It was shared by his leading friends and counselors. So experienced and astute a politician as Thurlow Weed wrote on the 22d of August. "When, ten days since, I told Mr. Lincoln that his reelection was an impossibility, I also told him that the information would soon come to him through other channels. It has doubtless ere this reached him. At any rate nobody here doubts it, nor do I see anybody from other States who authorizes the slightest hope of success. Mr. Raymond, who has just left me, says that unless some prompt and bold step be now taken all is lost. The people are wild for peace. They are told that the President will only listen to terms of peace on condition [that] slavery be abandoned. . . Mr. Raymond thinks commissioners should be immediately sent to Richmond offering to treat for peace on the basis of Union. That something should be done and promptly done to give the Administration a chance for its life is certain."

Weed
to Seward,
Aug. 22,
1864. MS.

Mr. Lincoln's action in this conjuncture was most original and characteristic. Feeling that the

campaign was going against him, he made up his mind deliberately as to the course he should pursue, and unwilling to leave his resolution to the chances of the changed mood which might follow in the natural exasperation of defeat, he resolved to lay down for himself the course of action demanded by his present conviction of duty. He wrote on the 23d of August the following memorandum:

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1864.

This morning, as for some days past, it seems exceedingly probable that this Administration will not be reëlected. Then it will be my duty to so coöperate with the President-elect as to save the Union between the election and the inauguration; as he will have secured his election on such ground that he cannot possibly save it afterwards.

Copied
from the
MS.

He then folded and pasted the sheet in such manner that its contents could not be read, and as the Cabinet came together he handed this paper to each member successively, requesting them to write their names across the back of it. In this peculiar fashion he pledged himself and the Administration to accept loyally the anticipated verdict of the people against him, and to do their utmost to save the Union in the brief remainder of his term of office. He gave no intimation to any member of the Cabinet of the nature of the paper they had signed until after his triumphant reëlection.¹

¹ We copy from the MS. diary of one of the President's secretaries under date of November 11, 1864, the following passage relating to this incident: "At the meeting of the Cabinet to-day the President took out a paper from his desk and said: 'Gentlemen, do you remember last summer I asked you all to sign your names to the back of a paper of which I did not show you the inside? This is it. Now, Mr. Hay, see if you can open this without tearing it.' He had pasted it up in so singular a style that it required some cutting to get it open. He then read this

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1864.

The Democratic Convention was finally called to meet in Chicago on the 29th of August. Much was expected from the strength and the audacity which the peace party in the Northwest had recently displayed, and the day of the meeting of the Convention was actually the date chosen by Rebel emissaries in Canada and their agents in the Western States for an outbreak which should effect that revolution in the Northwest which was the vague and chimerical dream that had been so long cherished and caressed in Richmond and Toronto.

About the time of the adjournment of Congress the Democratic members of that body issued an address to their party, which, when read after twenty-five years, shows how blinded by partisan passion these intelligent and well-meaning gentlemen, neither better nor worse in most respects than the rest of their fellow-citizens, had become. They charged in effect that there were only two classes of people supporting the Government — those who

memorandum [given in the text above]. The President said: 'You will remember that this was written at the time, six days before the Chicago nominating convention, when as yet we had no adversary and seemed to have no friends. I then solemnly resolved on the course of action indicated in this paper. I resolved in case of the election of General McClellan, being certain that he would be the candidate, that I would see him and talk matters over with him. I would say, "General, the election has demonstrated that you are stronger, have more influence with the American people than I. Now let us together, you with

your influence and I with all the executive power of the Government, try to save the country. You raise as many troops as you possibly can for this final trial, and I will devote all my energies to assist and finish the war."

"Seward said, 'And the General would have answered you, "Yes, yes," and the next day when you saw him again and pressed these views upon him he would have said, "Yes, yes," and so on forever, and would have done nothing at all.'

"'At least,' said Lincoln, 'I should have done my duty and have stood clear before my own conscience.'"

CHAP. XI.

1864.

were making money out of the war, and the radical Abolitionists; and they called upon the indefinite abstraction which they named the "country" to throw out of office the administration of a Government under favor of which these two classes of men "nestle in power and gratify their unholy greed and their detestable passions." The party of the Union—that is to say, the majority of the people of the country—is called in this address "a nightmare of corruption and fanaticism which is pressing out its very existence." The most remarkable feature of this singular document is its assumption that the people who were trying to save the Union and to reestablish its authority were influenced only by sentimental doctrines and the wild passions of fury and vengeance. "We do not decry theory," these Congressmen gravely said; "but we assert that statesmanship is concerned mainly in the domain of the practical, and that in the present imperfect condition of human affairs it is obliged to modify general ideas and adapt them to existing conditions." They called upon the country to sustain this calm and philosophic view of the function of statesmanship, "to bring the sound elements of society to the surface," to "purge the body politic of its unhealthy elements," and to substitute in places of public trust "just and broad-minded, pure and liberal men, in the place of radicals and corruptionists." This being done, they promised the millennium.

The Democratic National Convention came together at the time appointed, but it is by no means sure that any real and permanent advantage had been gained by the delay. The scheme

Aug. 29, 1864.

CHAP. XI. of the American Knights to inaugurate on that day their counter-revolution had, by the usual treachery of some of their members, been discovered and guarded against by a strong show of force in the city of Chicago, and its execution was postponed until the day of the November election. No great approach to harmony, on the subject of peace or war, had been made in the two months of observation and skirmishing which the managers had allowed themselves. The only manner in which the peace men and the war Democrats could arrive at an agreement was by mutual deception. The war Democrats, led by the delegation from New York, were working for a military candidate; and the peace Democrats, under the redoubtable leadership of Mr. Vallandigham, who had returned from Canada and was allowed to remain at large by the half-contemptuous and half-calculated lenity of the Government he defied, bent all their energies to a clear statement of their principles in the platform.

1864.

August Belmont, a German by birth and the representative of the Rothschilds' banking-house, called the delegates to order, informing them that the future of the Republic rested in their hands. "Four years of misrule," he said, "by a sectional, fanatical, and corrupt party have brought our country to the very verge of ruin." He gravely stated, expecting it to be believed, and apparently believing it himself, that the "results of such a calamity [as the reelection of Mr. Lincoln] must be the utter disintegration of our whole political and social system amidst bloodshed and anarchy." This German banker promised the Convention that the American people would rush to the support of its

CHAP. XI.

candidate and platform, "provided you will offer to their suffrage a tried patriot." This vague reference to McClellan was greeted with applause from the Eastern delegates. Mr. Belmont said: "We are here, not as war Democrats nor as peace Democrats, but as citizens of the great Republic"; and he named as temporary chairman William Bigler, formerly Governor of Pennsylvania. Mr. Bigler made a brief speech charging upon the Republicans all the woes of the country, and saying that "the men now in authority, because of the feud which they have so long maintained with violent and unwise men of the South, and because of a blind fanaticism about an institution of some of the States in relation to which they have no duties to perform and no responsibilities to bear, are rendered incapable of adopting the proper means to rescue our country—our whole country—from its present lamentable condition."

1864.

The usual committees were appointed, and Clement L. Vallandigham was presented by his State delegation as a member of the committee on platform. Several resolutions were offered in open convention—one by Washington Hunt of New York suggesting a convention of the States; one by Thomas L. Price of Missouri for a demonstration in favor of the freedom and purity of the elective franchise; and one by Alexander Long of Ohio, a furious advocate of peace, who had attained the distinction of censure by the Congress of the United States, suggested that a committee proceed forthwith to Washington to demand of Mr. Lincoln the suspension of the draft until after the election.

CHAP. XI.

Aug. 30, 1864.

Governor Seymour of New York was chosen permanent chairman of the Convention. He made a long and eloquent speech full of abstract devotion to the Union and of denunciation of all the measures that had hitherto been taken to save it. "This Administration," he said, "cannot now save this Union if it would. It has, by its proclamations, by vindictive legislation, by displays of hate and passion, placed obstacles in its own pathway which it cannot overcome, and has hampered its own freedom of action by unconstitutional acts." But Mr. Seymour did not mourn as one without hope. He continued: "If the Administration cannot save this Union, we can. Mr. Lincoln values many things above the Union; we put it first of all. He thinks a proclamation worth more than peace; we think the blood of our people more precious than the edicts of the President. . . . We demand no conditions for the restoration of our Union. We are shackled with no hates, no prejudices, no passions." And so,—as he imagined,—without prejudices, without hatred, and without passion, he went on denouncing his Government and the majority of his fellow-citizens with eloquent fury to the end of his speech. His address was greeted at its close with loud applause, not unmingled with calls on the part of the peace men for Vallandigham. The latter did not respond at that moment, but the most weighty utterance of the Convention was his, nevertheless—the second resolution of the platform, reported by the chairman, James Guthrie of Kentucky. There had been on the organization of the committee a contest between Guthrie and Vallandigham for the chairmanship. "Through the artifices of Cassidy, Tilden,



GENERAL OLIVER O. HOWARD.

and other New York politicians," Mr. Guthrie of Kentucky received twelve votes to eight for Vallandigham; but whatever managers may accomplish, the strongest man with the strongest force behind him generally has his way, and when the committee got to work Vallandigham carried too many guns for Guthrie. He wrote, to use his own words: "The material resolution of the Chicago platform, and carried it through the sub-committee and the general committee in spite of the most desperate, persistent opposition on the part of Cassidy and his friends, Mr. Cassidy himself in an adjoining room laboring to defeat it."

CHAP. XI.

Letter of
Vallandigham
to the
New York
"News,"
Oct. 22,
1864.

This Vallandigham resolution is the only one in the platform worth quoting. All the rest was a string of mere commonplaces declaring devotion to the Union, denouncing interference of the military in elections, enumerating the illegal and arbitrary acts of the Government, expressing the sympathy of the Convention with soldiers and sailors and prisoners of war. But the clause written by Mr. Vallandigham and by him forced upon his party—

Resolved, That this Convention does explicitly declare, as the sense of the American people, that after four years of failure to restore the Union by the experiment of war, during which, under the pretense of a military necessity, or war power higher than the Constitution, the Constitution itself has been disregarded in every part, and public liberty and private right alike trodden down and the material prosperity of the country essentially impaired, justice, humanity, liberty, and the public welfare demand that immediate efforts be made for a cessation of hostilities, with a view to an ultimate convention of the States, or other peaceable means, to the end that at the earliest practicable moment peace may be restored on the basis of the Federal Union of the States.

CHAP. XI.

Aug 31, 1864.

It is altogether probable that this distinct proposition of surrender to the Confederates might have been modified or defeated in full convention if the war Democrats had had the courage of their convictions; but they were so intent upon the nomination of McClellan that they considered the question of platform as of secondary importance, and these fatal resolutions were therefore adopted without debate, and the Convention passed to the nomination of candidates. General McClellan was nominated by John P. Stockton of New Jersey, followed by S. S. Cox of Ohio; Willard Saulsbury of Delaware nominated L. W. Powell of Kentucky, who with compliments declined; Mr. Stuart, in behalf of the peace faction from Ohio, nominated T. H. Seymour of Connecticut; and Charles A. Wickliffe of Kentucky raised the specter of the old-fashioned Democracy, in the Convention, by nominating ex-President Pierce in a speech more amusing than effective. McClellan received 174 votes, but before the result was declared the vote was raised upon revision to 202; Seymour received a little more than one-tenth of that number.

Mr. Vallandigham, who had taken possession of the Convention through his platform, now adopted the candidate also, and put the seal of his sinister approval upon General McClellan by moving that his nomination be made unanimous, which was done with great cheering. Mr. Wickliffe, the comic old man of the Convention, then offered a resolution that General McClellan, immediately after his inauguration in March next, should "open Abraham Lincoln's prison doors and let the captives free." Mr. Guthrie and George H. Pendleton were

the principal names mentioned in the first ballot for Vice-President, but on the second New York changed from Guthrie to Pendleton, and, all the other candidates being withdrawn, he was nominated, unanimously. Pendleton came to the stand and briefly addressed the Convention, accepting the nomination and promising to continue "faithful to those principles which lie at the very bottom of the organization of the Democratic party." The Convention did not adjourn as usual *sine die*. On the motion of Mr. Wickliffe, who said that the delegates from the West were "of the opinion that circumstances may occur between now and the 4th of March next which will make it proper for the Democracy of the country to meet in convention again," the Convention resolved to "remain as organized, subject to be called at any time and place that the Executive National Committee shall designate." The motives of this action were not avowed. It was taken as a significant warning that the leaders of the Democratic party held themselves ready for any extraordinary measures which the exigencies of the time might provoke or invite.

The New Yorkers had, however, the last word. Mr. Seymour, as chairman of the Convention, was chairman of the committee to inform McClellan of his nomination, and before he wrote the letter Atlanta had fallen, the tide had turned, and the winds of popular opinion, which had seemed stagnant throughout the midsummer, now began to blow favorably to the National cause. The committee, in their letter dated a week after the Convention adjourned, said: "Be assured that those for whom we speak were animated with the most earnest, de-

CHAP. XI.

Aug. 31, 1864.

Sept. 8, 1864.

CHAP. XI. voted, and prayerful desire for the salvation of the American Union, and preservation of the Constitution of the United States, and that the accomplishment of these objects was the guiding and impelling motive in every mind ; and we may be permitted to add that their purpose to maintain the Union is manifested in their selection, as their candidate, of one whose life has been devoted to its cause, while it is their earnest hope and confident belief that your election will restore to our country Union, Peace, and Constitutional Liberty.” The general answered on the same date. He also felt, with the New York politicians, that the poison of death was in the platform of the Convention ; that if he accepted it pure and simple, the campaign was hopeless ; his only possible chance for success was in his war record ; his position as a candidate on a platform of dishonorable peace was no less desperate than ridiculous. He, therefore, in his letter of acceptance renewed his assurances of devotion to the Union, the Constitution, the laws, and the flag of his country. He said :

Committee
to
McClellan,
Sept. 8, 1864.

The reëstablishment of the Union in all its integrity is, and must continue to be, the indispensable condition in any settlement. So soon as it is clear, or even probable, that our present adversaries are ready for peace, upon the basis of the Union, we should exhaust all the resources of statesmanship practiced by civilized nations and taught by the traditions of the American people, consistent with the honor and interests of the country, to secure such peace, reëstablish the Union, and guarantee for the future the constitutional rights of every State. The Union is the one condition of peace. We ask no more. Let me add, what I doubt not was, although unexpressed, the sentiment of the Convention, as it is of the people they represent, that when any one State is willing

to return to the Union it should be received at once, with a full guarantee of all its constitutional rights. . . But the Union must be preserved at all hazards. I could not look in the face of my gallant comrades of the army and navy, who have survived so many bloody battles, and tell them that their labors and the sacrifice of so many of our slain and wounded brethren had been in vain, that we had abandoned that Union for which we have so often periled our lives. A vast majority of our people, whether in the army and navy or at home, would, as I would, hail with unbounded joy the permanent restoration of peace, on the basis of the Union under the Constitution without the effusion of another drop of blood. But no peace can be permanent without union.

Having thus absolutely repudiated the platform upon which he was nominated, he coolly concluded, "Believing that the views here expressed are those of the Convention and the people you represent, I accept the nomination."¹

Upon this contradictory body of doctrine McClellan began his campaign. The platform of the convention was the law, his letter was the gospel, and the orators of the party might reconcile the two according to their sympathies or their ingenuity. The Ohio wing had no hesitation in taking its stand. "The Chicago platform," said Mr. Vallandigham, speaking from the same platform with Mr. Pendleton on the 16th of September, "enunciated its policy and principles by authority and was binding upon every Democrat, and by them the Democratic Administration must and should be governed. It was the only authorized exposition of the Democratic creed, and he repudiated all others." And a

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McClellan to Committee,
Sept. 8, 1864.

McPherson,
"History of the
Rebellion,"
p. 423.

¹ We have been shown several copies of this letter in the possession of Pierre T. Barlow, which indicate that in its composition General McClellan received the judicious and intelligent advice and assistance of Samuel L. M. Barlow.

CHAP. XI. week afterwards he went still further and specifically contradicted General McClellan. He said, "The two principal points in that letter of acceptance to which I object were brought before the committee. The one containing the threat of future war was unanimously rejected. The other, to the effect that until the States and people of the South had returned to the Union we would not exhaust these 'arts of statesmanship,' as they are called, received but three votes in that committee, though presented almost in the very words of the letter itself."

At Sidney,
Ohio,
Sept. 24.
1864.

CHAPTER XII

ATLANTA

ON the 17th of July Sherman began his march upon Atlanta. Thomas moved directly towards that city; Schofield took the road to Decatur, and McPherson, still further to the left, was to strike the railroad between Decatur and Stone Mountain. Johnston being instantly apprised of this order of march, took up his position for defense on Peach Tree Creek, a little rivulet north and east of Atlanta, which flows into the Chattahoochee near the railroad bridge. He resolved to throw the greater part of his own force against the right wing of Sherman, under Thomas, before Schofield and McPherson could come up from the left; but while planning his attack he received this dispatch from the Confederate adjutant-general: "I am directed by the Secretary of War to inform you that as you have failed to arrest the advance of the enemy to the vicinity of Atlanta, far in the interior of Georgia, and express no confidence that you can defeat or repel him, you are hereby relieved from the command of the Army and Department of Tennessee, which you will immediately turn over to General Hood." This action of the Confederate Government was entirely unexpected

CHAP. XII.

1864.

Johnston,
"Narrative
of Military
Operations,"
p. 349.

CHAP. XII. by General Johnston. He was aware of the hostile feeling existing towards him in the Confederate executive; but only a few days before General Bragg had passed through his camp on his way to Kirby Smith's department to ascertain, as he said, what reënforcements could be forthcoming from that region to General Johnston; and he had also received from Governor Brown of Georgia the gratifying intelligence that within a few days he could give him reënforcements of 10,000 State militia. It is true he had received dispatches from Richmond indicating a certain degree of dissatisfaction with his policy of retreat, and he had only recently had a telegram from the Secretary of War demanding positive information as to his plans and purposes, to which Johnston had replied in his usual manner, declining to commit himself positively to any especial course of action. It was this reply of Johnston's, Jefferson Davis says, which induced him to take the decisive step. He had long hesitated to do this, knowing Johnston's popularity in the Confederacy, and conscious that his own prejudice against him was well known and criticized throughout the country.

"Rise and
Fall of the
Con-
federate
Govern-
ment,"
Vol. II.,
p. 557.

Johnston at once wrote and published an order transferring the command of the army to General Hood; and the next morning, announcing his action to the Secretary of War, he permitted himself to say: "As to the alleged cause of my removal, I assert that Sherman's army is much stronger compared with that of Tennessee, than Grant's compared with that of Northern Virginia. Yet the enemy has been compelled to advance much more slowly to the vicinity of Atlanta than to that of

Richmond and Petersburg, and penetrated much deeper into Virginia than into Georgia." Replying to the Secretary's charge that he expressed no confidence in his ability to defeat the enemy, he added, "Confident language by a military commander is not usually regarded as evidence of competence."

CHAP. XII.

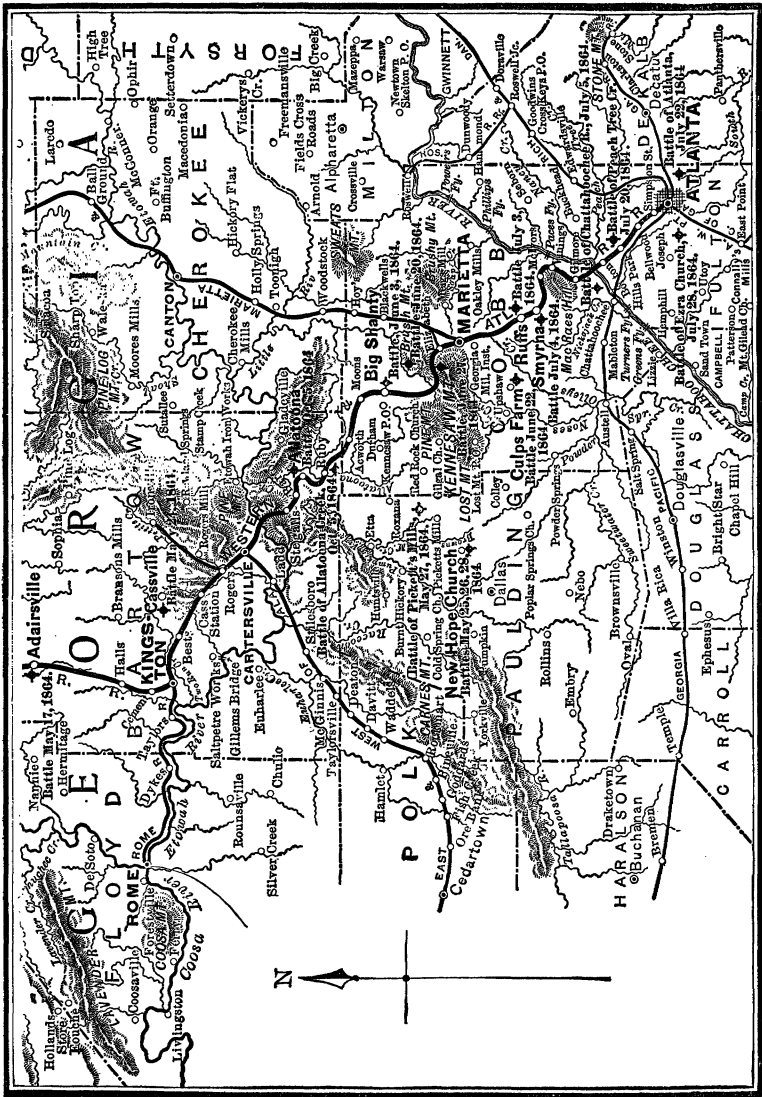
Johnston,
"Narrative
of Military
Operations,"
p. 349.

General Hood, though he had been extremely free in his criticisms of Johnston, and had in fact done what he could to undermine the confidence of the Confederate War Department in his chief, felt himself greatly embarrassed by this sudden and unexpected promotion. He was, he himself says, comparatively a stranger to the Western army. He was a fanatical admirer of Stonewall Jackson, and could see no merit in any military operations which differed from those of that energetic commander. He had not succeeded in inspiring that army with confidence or enthusiasm; and on the other hand he entertained an opinion of the troops whom he was to command which was in itself a presage of disaster. He says: "The troops of the Army of Tennessee had for such length of time been subjected to the ruinous policy pursued from Dalton to Atlanta that they were unfitted for united action in pitched battle. . . They had become wedded to the 'timid defensive' policy, and naturally regarded with distrust a commander likely to initiate offensive operations."

J. B. Hood,
"Advance
and
Retreat,"
p. 162.

On the morning of the 18th of July, General Hood, after a sleepless night, took General A. P. Stewart, who had succeeded to the command of Polk's corps, and rode to the quarters of General Johnston, and there requested that Johnston should

1864.



BATTLES AROUND ATLANTA.

FROM "THE MOUNTAIN CAMPAIGNS IN GEORGIA; OR, WAR SCENES ON THE W. & A." PUBLISHED BY THE WESTERN & ATLANTIC R. R. CO.

pocket the Secretary's dispatch, leave Hood in command of his corps, and fight the battle for Atlanta. To this preposterous proposition Johnston naturally replied that the order of the President must stand unless it were countermanded. Hardee and Stewart then joined Hood in a telegram to Jefferson Davis, requesting that the order for removal be suspended, at least until the fate of Atlanta was decided. Jefferson Davis at once replied, "A change of commanders under existing circumstances was regarded as so objectionable that I only accepted it as the alternative of continuing a policy which has proven disastrous. . . The order has been executed, and I cannot suspend it without making the case worse than it was before the order was issued." Even after this telegram was received Hood says that in a private interview he again urged Johnston to "pocket the correspondence" and resume his command. He lays great stress on this action in his memoirs and seems to ascribe credit to himself and blame to Johnston that he refused to entertain the absurd proposal.

Hood,
"Advance
and
Retreat,"
p. 127.

Ibid.

Johnston explained his plan of attack upon Thomas at Peach Tree Creek and, if this were unsuccessful, his scheme to hold the lines with a part of his force and attack the right or left flank of the Federal army as might seem most expedient.¹ Hood accepted Johnston's plan and at once set about carrying it into effect. The news of the change of Confederate commanders reached Sherman on the

¹ There is a direct contradiction in the accounts given by General Hood and General Johnston in regard to these transactions, but we have followed the account of General Johnston because it is better supported.

CHAP. XII. 18th. The information was conveyed by a newspaper which Frank P. Blair, Jr., had found at a farmhouse and sent to Sherman by a courier. He answered Blair "that it was very good news, but to look out for an attack; that Hood would make it very lively for us, and that it was necessary to be exceedingly cautious." The news was received throughout Sherman's army with the greatest joy. Johnston's conduct from Tunnel Hill to Atlanta had been such as to inspire his adversaries with sincere respect. They had found him, at every move, posted across their path in the best chosen positions, behind intrenchments sometimes prepared with forethought, sometimes improvised on the instant, but always so disposed as to make his inferior force equal to twice its number. Cool, cautious, and imperturbable, he always held his ground as long as it was prudent to hold it, and then retired with such care and deliberation as to suffer the minimum loss in men and material. The leading officers of Sherman's army gathered together and hastily compared notes in regard to the new commander. He was personally known to McPherson, Howard, and Schofield. McPherson had been his intimate friend at West Point; had assisted him in his mathematics and helped him through the consequences of many a boyish scrape. Schofield said he was a man bold even to rashness and courageous in the extreme. Howard gave the same testimony as to his courage and energy, and added that he was a man of little flexibility of mind; but all agreed that the change in commanders meant fighting, and before many hours the truth of this was shown.

On the evening of the 20th of July Hardee and Stewart, commanding respectively the corps of the center and left, made a furious attack upon Thomas's corps which had just got into position on the banks of Peach Tree Creek. Cheatham was left on the Confederate right to guard against the arrival of Schofield and McPherson. The battle was one of the hardest fought in this memorable campaign, but Hood's attack — apparently successful at first from the mere momentum with which it was made — met finally with a disastrous repulse. His army suffered more than twice the loss inflicted upon Thomas. The lines were so close together that in many places the troops became commingled and fought hand to hand; but in the end the Confederates were beaten back to their intrenchments and the Union lines were strongly connected from the north to the south of Atlanta, on the east. In this battle, Colonel Benjamin Harrison, afterwards President of the United States, won deserved distinction.

Although General Hood pretends in his memoirs that the failure of his attack on the 20th was due to lack of energy on the part of Hardee, this was clearly an afterthought, adopted six months later, when the necessity presented itself of explaining his unbroken series of defeats. That he did not lose confidence in Hardee at that time was shown by his assigning to him, two days afterwards, the most important and daring enterprise of the campaign, and the one which came nearest succeeding. He was still haunted by the idea of emulating in the west the exploits of Stonewall Jackson in Virginia. The moment his attack on

Hood,
"Advance
and
Retreat,"
p. 171.

CHAP. XII. Peach Tree Creek failed, he resolved to withdraw his army to the inner fortifications about Atlanta, and to detach a heavy force under Hardee to move by the right flank, pass beyond the Union left, and assail McPherson's flank and rear by a movement which he hoped to make overwhelming in celerity and momentum. This manœuvre which was skillfully planned by Hood was executed by Hardee with admirable vigor and ability. On the morning of the 22d Sherman, finding the line in front of Thomas and Schofield abandoned, thought for a moment that the enemy had evacuated Atlanta, but, moving his whole line forward, he was soon undeceived. He found the inner intrenchments fully manned and strongly held, while shortly after, the rattle of musketry on McPherson's exposed left flank, and what was still more disquieting the sound of distant artillery in the neighborhood of Decatur where Joseph Wheeler's cavalry was attacking J. W. Sprague's brigade, put the whole army on the alert to confront the most serious danger to which it had ever been exposed.

July, 1864.

J. D. Cox,
"Atlanta,"
pp. 166, 167.

Sherman and McPherson were engaged in conversation at the moment this attack took place. Sherman instantly gave the necessary orders to meet the emergency, and McPherson rode to his endangered left flank. Fortunately Hardee had already met with an unexpected and disconcerting obstacle. Instead of finding the vacant space he expected in rear of McPherson's flank, he came upon two divisions of Dodge's corps that were marching to join McPherson, and that had only to face into line to be ready to meet his attack. McPherson, seeing this part of the field so providen-

CHAP. XII.

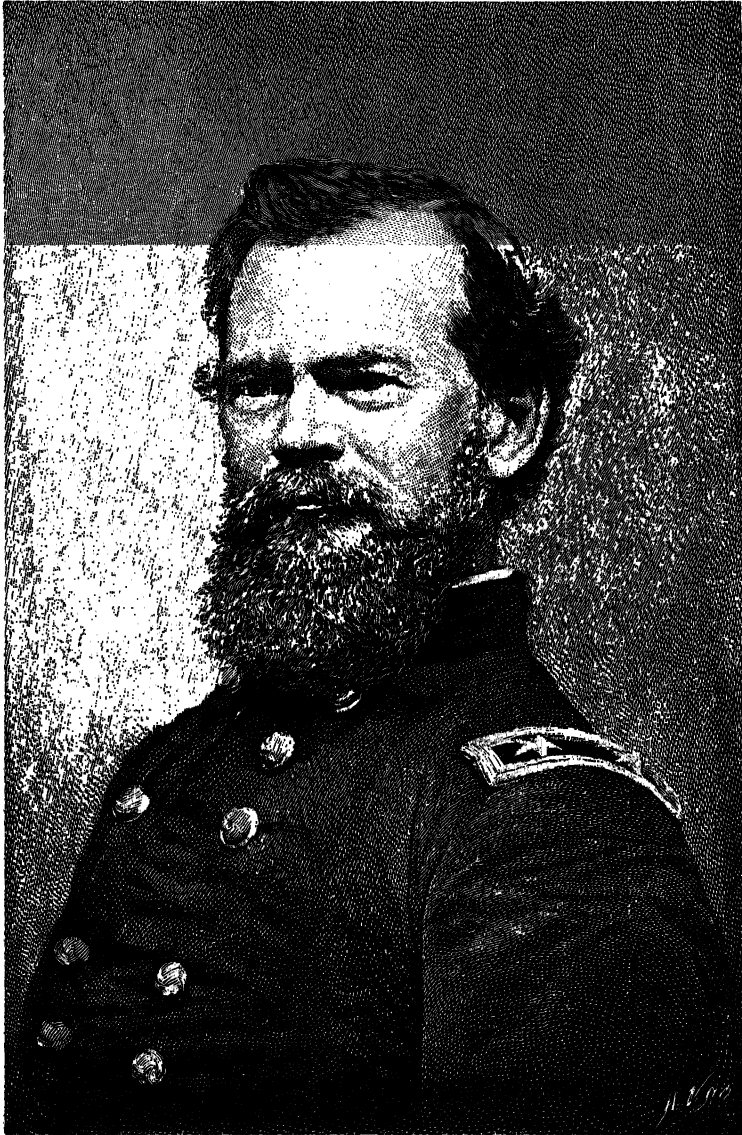
July 23, 1864.

tially provided for, turned to ride through a woodland path to the rear of the Seventeenth Corps, and rushed in a moment upon a squad of Confederate skirmishers, who had penetrated the interval, and filled the path which McPherson knew to be clear a moment before. In answer to their summons to surrender he gave a military salute, and turning to gallop away was shot dead from his horse. The animal, streaming with wounds, galloped back to where Sherman was still sitting, and a single orderly following conveyed to the commanding general the news of the great calamity which had befallen the army. In the midst of his grief for the loss of his friend, Sherman was greatly disquieted for fear McPherson's wallet with important papers relating to the campaign had fallen into the enemy's hands; but within a few moments the ground where he had fallen was regained by the Union troops, his captors captured in their turn, and the papers found in the haversack of a Confederate soldier. John A. Logan was put in temporary command of the Army of the Tennessee, and under the most trying circumstances conducted the fighting on the Union left throughout the day with perfect coolness and judgment.

Hardee, in spite of the untoward meeting with Dodge's corps, pushed his attack with unshaken vigor and determination. It is a singular feature of the history of this battle that we must look for justice to the general who fought it; not from his own commander, but from his opponents. Hood, in his account of it, seeks ungenerously to lay upon the shoulders of Hardee the blame for its failure. He pretends that he did not pass beyond the flank

CHAP. XII. of Blair, whereas he went completely to his rear ; that he marched his force only five miles, when in fact he made a march of fifteen before attacking. Hardee's right flank came, as we have said, against Dodge's command ; it struck the latter in line of march, which was instantly converted into line of battle ; but Hardee's left burst through the wooded space in rear of Blair, turning his left flank and taking his intrenchments in reverse. His march was as skillful, his attack as vigorous, as that of Stonewall Jackson at Chancellorsville ; but he met with a far different resistance from the veterans of Dodge, Logan, and Blair, from that which was opposed to Jackson on Hooker's exposed right by the Eleventh Corps in the Wilderness of Virginia. The result proved that the Army of the Tennessee was panic-proof. Blair's soldiers, finding the enemy rushing upon their rear, simply leaped over their intrenchments and fighting from the reverse side repulsed them and drove them back with great slaughter.

Nor was this the only test of their organization and their courage ; for Hood, seeing that Hardee was fully engaged on the flank and rear, threw forward the force he had retained, in front of the Seventeenth Corps, to support the flanking movement ; so that these hardy soldiers, who from the reverse of their own intrenchments had repulsed the Confederates attacking in their rear, now leaped once more across their own works and drove back this second attack from their front. The Confederate attack on the Union front was made with such energy, and was so assisted by the formation of the ground, that a gap was opened near the point where McPherson's and Schofield's armies joined. This mo-



GENERAL JAMES B. McPHERSON.

mentary mishap occurred under the very eyes of Sherman and Schofield, but was at once repaired by Sherman's ordering Schofield to mass his artillery so as to open on the Confederate flank as it pressed towards the east. Cheatham's advance was thus checked with frightful carnage. The Fifteenth Corps rallied and made an irresistible counter-charge, which drove the enemy back, re-establishing the line and gaining most of the captured guns. The fighting was too hot to last long; Cheatham and Hardee, being engaged upon the two sides of a right angle several miles apart, could not support each other with the efficiency required. Every instant when the troops of Logan and Blair were not fighting they were digging, and a light line of intrenchments gradually grew up from the Union salient towards the southwest, which was called "Leggett's Hill" from the gallant charge which General M. D. Leggett had made in capturing it the day before, to the point where Dodge's corps still stood in position, who had already covered their own front with that marvelous dexterity and rapidity which distinguished Sherman's army.

Hardee's attack had been swift and strong; but the battle was not to him; its crisis was already passed; and although again and again the Confederate forces advanced to the attack with desperate valor it was all clearly useless. G. W. Smith's Georgia militia struck with the courage of veterans against Schofield's position, but were easily and promptly driven back. Schofield, seeing the failure of the Confederate onset, suggested to Sherman that he could follow up the retreating enemy with his command, and inter-

July, 1864.

CHAP. XII. pose a corps between Hood's flanking force and the city of Atlanta, thus finishing the campaign by one crushing blow. Howard agreed to the suggestion, but Sherman for several reasons rejected it. The plan was perhaps not absolutely certain to succeed, and the success that had been gained was too much to expose to the risks of failure; and besides this, there was another consideration which had a singular influence with Sherman. His reply to Schofield's suggestion was, "No. Let the Army of the Tennessee fight it out this time." It was his own army, the creation of his own genius, the pride of his heart; he was pleased to think that Hood's whole army had struck with all its force at the Army of the Tennessee and that that army, unaided, had beaten it back.¹

It was only at nightfall that Hardee abandoned the desperately contested field and, making a half wheel to the rear, withdrew his right wing to a point where he could still oppose the further operations of Sherman to the left flank.

But Sherman had no such intention. In moving the Army of the Tennessee upon Decatur, and thence to Atlanta, his only purpose had been to destroy the Augusta road; that having been accomplished, and the desperate attack of Hood upon the left wing having been repulsed, Sherman at once resumed his original intention of moving by the right flank upon the southern line of communication supplying Atlanta. He left Schofield to stretch out so as to rest his left flank on the Au-

¹ We find this incident in the account given of the battles about Atlanta in a series of graphic and admirably written articles contributed by General Oliver O. Howard to the "Atlantic Monthly" Magazine, during the year of 1876.

gusta road, and then began to work the bulk of his force gradually around the north to the west of Atlanta. The first important matter demanding his attention, however, was the appointment of a successor to General McPherson to command the Army of the Tennessee. He could hardly hope to replace him, he wrote. "History tells us of but few who so blended the grace and gentleness of the friend with the dignity, courage, faith, and manliness of the soldier. His public enemies, even the men who directed the fatal shot, never spoke or wrote of him without expressions of marked respect. Those whom he commanded loved him even to idolatry; and I, his associate and commander, fail in words adequate to express my opinion of his great worth."

CHAP. XII.

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Committee
on Conduct
of the War.
1865-66.
Supple-
ment,
Vol. I.,
p. 138.

Ibid., p. 136.

General Joseph Hooker was the one officer of that army who in distinction, in rank, and in service, would have seemed designated for the vacancy; but his character and temperament were so uncongenial to Sherman that, as he frankly says, he never considered him for the place. General Logan, the commander of the Fifteenth Corps, who had temporarily and with such brilliant valor and success taken charge of the Army of the Tennessee when McPherson fell, thought that he should have been permitted to retain the command, at least, until the close of the campaign. Frank P. Blair, Jr., also had claims for the place which could not be despised; but Sherman's insuperable objection to both these able and devoted officers was that they were politicians, and throughout his career he cherished that vague and not quite intelligent suspicion of politicians

CHAP. XII. to which we have already referred. He regarded Washington with whimsical horror as a sink of corruption and iniquity, and thought that no good could come out of it. This prepossession sometimes had ludicrous results. Hearing that General Peter J. Osterhaus had been made a major-general, and perhaps stung by the complaints of meritorious subordinates that their claims had not been recognized, he wrote on the 25th of July an angry dispatch to Washington declaring that it was an act of injustice to officers who stood by their posts in the day of danger to neglect them and advance men like Osterhaus, who go to the rear in search of promotion. "If the rear," he says, "be the post of honor, then we had better all change front on Washington."

1863.

Report
Committee
on Conduct
of the War,
1865-66,
Supple-
ment,
Vol. I.,
p. 139.

This dispatch was shown to the President who, instead of resenting its tone of disrespect and insubordination, wrote in his kindest and calmest manner a letter to General Sherman, in which he informed him that the promotion of Osterhaus had been made upon written recommendations from no less trustworthy sources than Generals Grant and Sherman. But these recommendations had been made several months before, and Sherman's recollections of the Vicksburg campaign had somewhat faded in his mind during the fiery experiences of the last sixty days. He frankly acknowledged his error, and repeats in his "Memoirs" that he was fairly caught. The Government bore him no malice for this incident. They continued to comply heartily with every request he made; they even offered him, voluntarily, eight promotions to the grade of brigadier-general to be distributed on

Vol. II.,
p. 94.

his recommendation among the most meritorious colonels of his command. It is curiously characteristic of the general that in his "Memoirs" he attributes this proof of signal favor to his Osterhaus letter.

CHAP. XII.

Sherman,
"Memoirs,"
Vol. II.,
p. 95.

He finally selected General O. O. Howard to command the Army of the Tennessee. This was a choice extremely agreeable to Schofield and Thomas, the commanders of the other armies, and General Howard was unquestionably a more comfortable person to live with than General Hooker. The results justified the appointment, and the faithful and devoted service which General Howard thenceforward rendered in his new command makes any vindication of Sherman's course in the matter now superfluous; but General Hooker naturally felt deeply outraged by this appointment. It was not merely that his rank was greater than that of Howard, but he felt that the primary cause of the failure at Chancellorsville, which deprived him of the place which he thought he merited as general-in-chief of the army, was due to Howard's fault. Howard went to the West as his subordinate; and Hooker had, up to that moment, exercised with unfailing ability and success a more important command than his junior. On the announcement of Howard's promotion, Hooker at once applied to be relieved of the command of the Twentieth Army Corps. Sherman warmly approved the application; D. S. Stanley was appointed to command the Fourth Corps in place of Howard, and Slocum, as a final humiliation to Hooker, was brought back from Vicksburg and appointed to the command of the Twentieth Corps.

July 24, 1864.

CHAP. XII. The President did not share the prejudice which Sherman felt towards Hooker, but grateful to the former for his distinguished services, and relying upon him for the success of the arduous campaign in which he was engaged, he felt like denying him nothing which the general himself considered necessary to success.

In this manner General Hooker retired from active service in the field. He was not, however, left idle. A few weeks later he was placed in command of the Northern Department; in the next year he commanded the Department of the East, and after the war for a short period the Department of the Lakes. He was mustered out of his volunteer commission in 1866, and two years later was retired from the service with the brevet rank of Major-General in the Army of the United States. His health was at this time completely shattered, and a few years later he died. In the paralytic, querulous old man, whose only subjects of conversation were his grievances against McClellan, Meade, and Sherman, there was little to remind one of the bold, dashing, picturesque soldier of Williamsburg and Lookout Mountain. In the country at large he never lost his popularity, which was founded on a basis of brilliant abilities and honorable service, and gained the final touch of splendid legend in the "battle above the clouds."

July, 1864.

The road to Augusta having been thoroughly destroyed, the road from Atlanta south to Macon became now the vital objective point of Sherman's campaign. While he pushed his heavy battalions continually to the right he prepared important cavalry expeditions on both flanks for the purpose

of cutting Hood's communications. His cavalry and infantry detachments both moved on the morning of the 27th of July. Our space will not allow us to detail the various striking and unexpected incidents which the two cavalry columns, the one to the right under Edward M. McCook and the one to the left under Stoneman, met with in their march. It is enough to say that both expeditions virtually failed, though McCook saved his force and even inflicted some damage upon the enemy. From Stoneman great things were expected; his force was so large that it ought not to have been stopped by anything thrown in its way; and the task committed to him was one of the most inspiring allotted to any cavalry general in the war, being no less than to break the Macon railroad and, after that, to proceed to Andersonville and liberate the thirty-five thousand Union prisoners confined there, whose sufferings were a bitter affliction to the nation. This duty had been confided to him at his own request by General Sherman, who saw the difficulties in the way of it: but thought that even a chance of success would warrant the effort. "I will keep the enemy busy," wrote Sherman, "so that you shall have nothing to contend with but the cavalry, and if you can bring back to this army any or all of those prisoners of war it will be an achievement that will entitle you and your command to the love and admiration of the whole country." Stoneman destroyed a large amount of rolling stock at Griswold, made a demonstration upon Macon, which failed, and then being intercepted and, as he supposed, surrounded, by a force which ought not to have delayed him an hour, he gave orders to his

CHAP. XII.

1864.

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Committee
on Conduct
of the War,
1865-66,
Supple-
ment,
Vol. I.,
p. 140.

CHAP. XII. brigade commanders to cut their way out, while he with a few hundred of his men occupied the attention of the enemy until it was too late to escape, and then surrendered.

The movement of the infantry by the right flank at once attracted the attention of General Hood who sent General S. D. Lee with his corps to attack the Federal flank upon the Lickskillet road. The assault was made upon Logan's corps with great fury but indifferent success, and Hood dispatched the corps of General Stewart to the support of Lee. The greater part of his army was thus engaged in an assault upon Sherman's right flank. It was Howard's first battle in command of the Army of Tennessee, and, assisted by the devoted and brilliant services of his corps commanders, he defeated the Confederates with great slaughter. General Hood says, founding his opinion upon that of S. D. Lee, that the Confederate troops could not be brought to act unitedly; "whilst one brigade fought gallantly another failed to do its duty." The officers on the Union side, who saw with what devoted valor the Confederates advanced upon the Federal intrenchments, laying their windrows of dead before the parapet, do not agree in this cruel censure inflicted by the Confederate commander upon his own troops.

Hood,
"Advance
and
Retreat,"
p. 194.

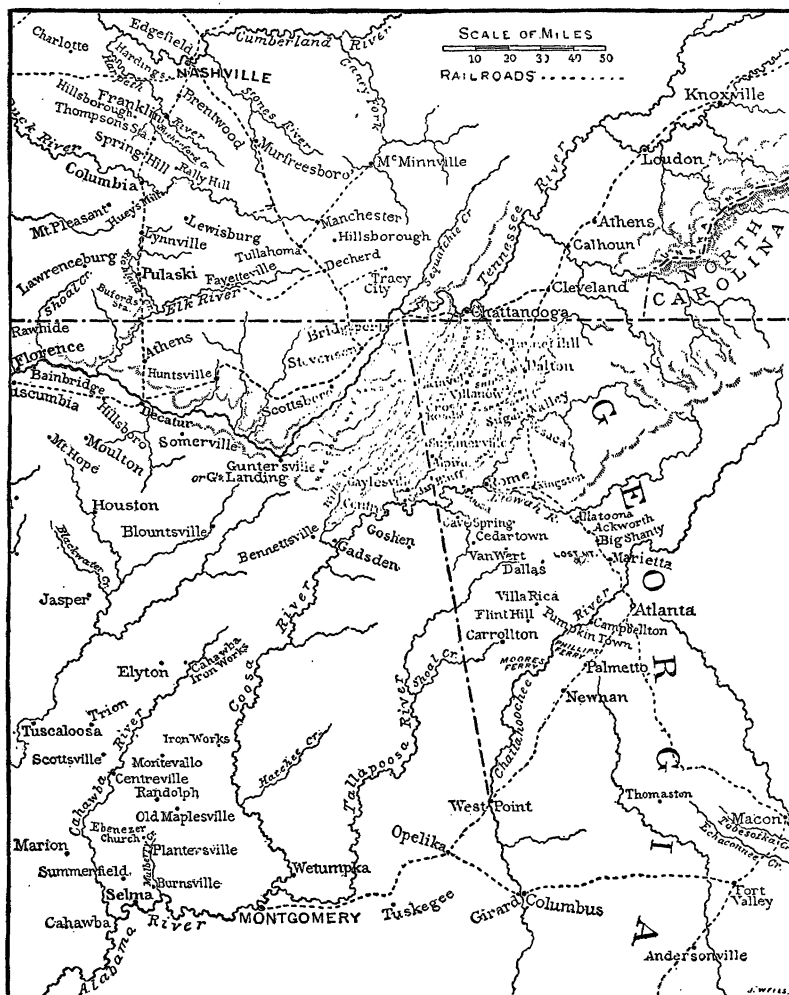
Hood, with the lack of logic that is seen in all of his operations, now concluded, because Sherman's operations in the Confederate rear had been of little effect, that he could accomplish the discomfiture of his adversary by a raid in the Union rear; hoping, as he says, that the movement would compel Sherman to retreat for want of supplies and thus allow

him an opportunity of falling upon the Federal rear with his main body. He suggested this plan to Mr. Davis in Richmond. It met with his hearty concurrence; the terrible consequences of Hood's reckless aggressive policy were, it would seem, beginning to be appreciated in Richmond. Mr. Davis said: "The loss consequent upon attacking the enemy in his intrenchments requires you to avoid that if practicable"; and Hood at once ordered Wheeler with 4500 men to begin operations. He threw himself in Sherman's rear with great activity; burned the bridge over the Etowah; recapturing Dalton and Resaca, destroying a long stretch of railroad track, and capturing some mules and horses; but this movement, comparatively successful as it was, produced no effect whatever upon Sherman's general plans. He ordered John Newton's division to Chattanooga and John M. Corse's division to Rome, and adopting what measures seemed to him expedient for the repairing and further protection of the roads, pushed his forces steadily on by the right flank. He even took advantage of the absence of Wheeler to throw Judson Kilpatrick with a large force of cavalry upon the Macon road. Kilpatrick, with celerity and with what efficiency a mounted force could bring to bear upon such an object, performed the task allotted to him, and came back reporting that he had destroyed three miles of railroad about Jonesboro; that he had fought a division of infantry and a brigade of cavalry, had captured a battery and a few prisoners. He thought he had rendered the road useless for at least ten days; but his calculations were, as

CHAP. XII.
Aug. 2, 1864.

Hood,
"Advance
and
Retreat,"
p. 198.

Ibid., p. 199.



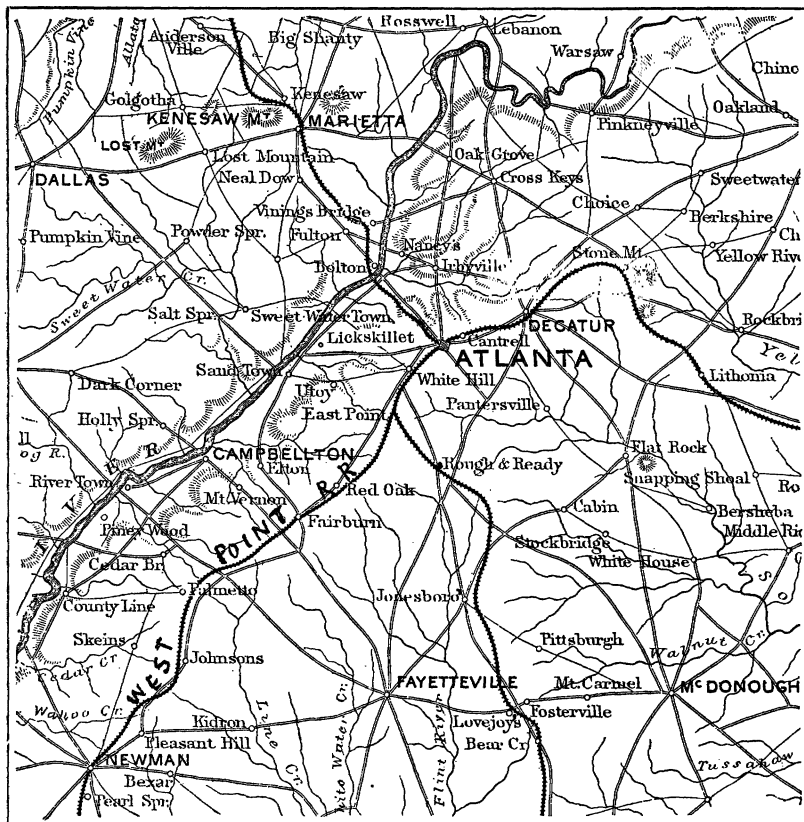
OUTLINE MAP OF OPERATIONS IN NORTH GEORGIA AND ALABAMA.

usual in these cavalry raids, wide of the mark, and his report was hardly in before the rattle and whistle of the trains from the south were heard again in the National intrenchments.

Sherman, after a month of more or less unsuccessful experiments, now made up his mind definitely that cavalry could not or would not work hard enough to disable a railroad properly. He wrote to Halleck on the 22d of August after Kilpatrick returned, "I expect I will have to swing across to that road in force to make the matter certain"; and having adopted that resolution, he lost not a moment in putting it into execution. Wheeler was up near the Hiawasseo wearing out his horses in a useless raid. The damage he had done to the railroad about Resaca and Dalton had been repaired. Sherman rode down to the Chattahoochee bridge on the 24th, and satisfied himself that it could be defended by a single corps left there for that purpose, by taking advantage of the Confederate works built there by Johnston; and returning to his camp he telegraphed to Halleck that he would commence the movement round Atlanta by the south the next night, and that for some time they might expect at Washington to hear little from him. On the night of the 25th and the 26th the whole army drew out of its trenches, abandoning the works it had taken the labor of so many hands to build, and the blood of so many brave men to defend, and swung off round Hood's left flank, by the country roads, to strike the Macon railroad at Jonesboro. The corps of Stewart and Lee at once occupied the empty works. Hood for a moment, with foolish exultation, adopted the be-

1864.

Sherman,
"Memoirs,"
Vol. II.,
p. 104.



MAP OF THE FIELD OPERATIONS AROUND ATLANTA.

CHAP. XII. lief that terror of Wheeler's cavalry had driven Sherman in retreat to the north across the Chattahoochee.¹ It was not until the 28th that General Armstrong reported to Hood that the enemy was in large force at Fairburn on the West Point road. "It became at once," he says, — and the reader will

¹ General Cox in his admirable work on the Atlanta Campaign, work on the Atlanta Campaign, tion with General William J. Hardee as his authority for this statement. pp. 197, 198, quotes a conversa-

not fail to appreciate the comic force of the adverb, —“evident that General Sherman was moving with his main body to destroy the Macon road, and that the fate of Atlanta depended upon our ability to defeat this movement.”

Sherman's primary object in this expedition was the destruction of the Macon road. A single sentence from his orders to General Thomas show not only how minute was the attention that he gave to all the details of operations under his charge, but it also gives a most concise and graphic account of the manner in which he went about to destroy railroads: “My own experience demonstrates the proper method to be to march a regiment to the road, stack arms, loosen two rails opposite the right and two opposite the left of the regiment, then to heave the whole track, rails and ties, over, breaking it all to pieces; then pile the ties in the nature of crib-work, and lay the rails over them; then by means of fence rails make a bonfire, and when the rails are red-hot let men give the rail a twist which cannot be straightened without machinery. Also fill up some of the cuts with heavy logs and trunks of trees and branches, and cover up and fill with dirt.”

Howard marched in advance on the right wing, Thomas held the center, and Schofield the left. The 29th was spent in thoroughly breaking the West Point railroad according to General Sherman's graphic directions. Howard then moved on towards Jonesboro, Schofield on the left towards Rough-and-Ready, and Thomas in easy support towards Renfrew's. With an adversary like Hood it was almost impossible for Sherman to foresee

CHAP. XII.

Hood,
“Advance
and
Retreat,”
p. 203.

Aug. 28, 1864.

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Committee
on Conduct
of the War,
1865-66,
Supple-
ment,
Part I.,
p. 184.

Aug., 1864.

CHAP. XII. and guard against his possible eccentricities. Sherman describes Schofield's attitude as "daring and inviting the enemy to sally out and to attack him," which Hood says he would have done had not Sherman "been doubly protected by the Chattahoochee, deep intervening creeks and ravines extending to the river," and his "wall of parapets. . . This move not being practicable by reason of these obstructions, I was forced," he says, "to await further developments."

Sherman, "Memoirs," Vol. II., p. 106.

Hood, "Advance and Retreat," p. 204.

The developments were speedily furnished him. The whole army moved straight for the Macon railroad; on the 30th Schofield reached it near Rough-and-Ready, Thomas at two points below, while Howard, arriving at the Flint River, pushed boldly across, Hazen's division carrying the further bank, and the barricades which defended it. Logan rushed his whole corps over and took the high ground between the river and the railroad, where he strongly intrenched himself, Hazen on the left and William Harrow on the right, Osterhaus being in reserve. T. E. G. Ransom was placed in position west of the river facing the south, and Blair, when he arrived next morning, faced his corps northeast in the rear of Logan's left. Bridges were hastily constructed, by which Logan on the east and Blair and Ransom on the left were put thoroughly in communication. Hood had by this time recovered from the confusion into which he had been thrown, and had sent Hardee and Lee to attack Sherman's right wing under Howard. In the afternoon of the 31st Hardee made his assault, the brunt of the fighting falling upon Hazen's division. Hood had given him the orders, so easy to give and so diffi-

Aug., 1864.

cult to execute, to attack and drive the enemy across Flint River. This being done, he says, he intended to attack Sherman in flank with Stewart's corps and the militia whom he retained in Atlanta. CHAP. XII.

Whether or not it be that Hardee, having lost all confidence in the capacity of his commander, attacked with less than his usual energy, his distrust insensibly communicating itself to his troops, the fact is that the Confederate attack here lacked its usual impetuosity. Hood himself says in his official report that the number of men on the Confederate side considerably exceeded that of the enemy; yet the attack failed, being easily repulsed in every part of the field; and in the evening Hood, appearing by this time to have completely lost his head, ordered Lee's corps to march back and take position in the vicinity of Rough-and-Ready. Lee marched as he was ordered, and Hardee did his best, by holding a bold front and stretching out his lines, to disguise from the enemy this fatal diminution of his forces. If Howard had known that half of Hardee's army had marched to the north he could have made short work of the rest; but, as Sherman once observed, there was this great disadvantage in fighting with a fool, you could never conceive what he was going to do. Sherman and Thomas arrived on the ground on the afternoon of the 1st of September, and hearing from Howard, what he had just ascertained, of the departure of Lee, Sherman hurried orders in every direction for the Army of the Cumberland to push forward and assault Hardee, hoping to capture the whole of his corps. One aide after another was dispatched upon this quest, and at last General Thomas him- Aug. 31, 1864.

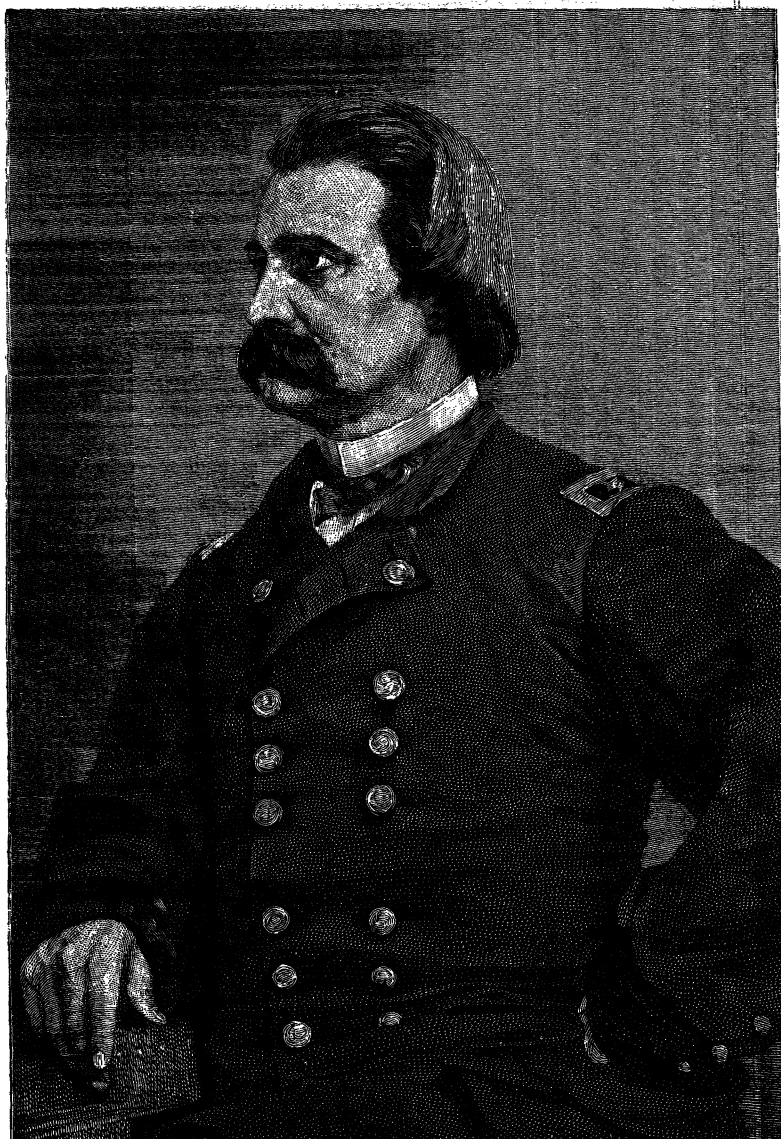
Hood,
"Advance
and
Retreat,"
p. 205.

1864.

CHAP. XII. self rode off at a gallop to bring forward his troops. Several chroniclers think it worthy of mention that this was the first time in the war that the ponderous and deliberate hero of Chickamauga was seen to move with such undignified haste; but the night came too quickly on, and Hardee made his escape.

Aug. 31, 1864. Sherman had sent orders to Slocum to feel forward cautiously from the Chattahoochee to ascertain what Hood was doing at Atlanta. All night Sherman, unable to sleep, waited in restlessness and impatience for the dawn. About midnight he heard from the north sounds like distant detonations. Instead of asking one of the experienced officers of the staff his opinion as to these sounds, he took the characteristic course of waking up a farmer in the neighborhood and asking him what he thought of them. He replied — with the positiveness derived from his summer's education — that it sounded like a battle at Atlanta, and Sherman could only wait for the morning to come to solve the doubt in his mind whether Hood was blowing up his own magazines or Slocum had reached forward and had engaged him in fight.

When morning came, it was ascertained that Hardee was gone, and Sherman starting after him in hot pursuit, came upon his lines at a point near Lovejoy's Station. Here, while feeling the new Confederate position, rumors began to arrive that Atlanta had fallen, and later in the day a letter from Slocum confirmed the momentous news. Slocum had heard the sounds which had so disturbed Sherman, and moving rapidly from the bridge at daylight had entered Atlanta without opposition.



GENERAL JOHN A. LOGAN.

Sherman sent the news to Thomas. This imperturbable soldier, who yesterday had for the first time galloped his horse, now, says Sherman, "snapped his fingers, whistled, and almost danced." Hood saw there was no hope for Atlanta from the moment that Hardee was repulsed at Jonesboro. He says in his memoirs that, had it not been for the necessity of keeping his army between Sherman and the Andersonville prison, he would have met Sherman's bold movement by another far more bold—and it may be said, less judicious—that is, to move north across Peach Tree Creek and the Chattahoochee and take a position near the Alabama line across Sherman's line of supplies; but this plan never had a chance of realization. He stopped Lee's corps on its northward march near Rough-and-Ready, posted him so as to protect the Confederate left flank, marched out of Atlanta at five o'clock on the McDonough road, and concentrated his army at Lovejoy's Station. Sherman telegraphed on the 3d to Washington: "Atlanta is ours, and fairly won. . . Since the 5th of May we have been in one constant battle or skirmish, and need rest." He concluded to make no further pursuit from that point, but ordered his army back to Atlanta on the 5th of September.

Ungrudging honors were paid by the Government to Sherman and his troops for this magnificent achievement, one of the most important that the cause of the country had yet gained, not only in the value of its results, but in the skill and good conduct by which it was brought about. The President issued an order in these words: "The national thanks are tendered by the

CHAP. XII.

Sherman,
"Memoirs,"
Vol. II.,
p. 109.

Hood,
"Advance
and
Retreat,"
p. 207.

Sept. 1, 1864.

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Committee
on Conduct
of the War,
1865-66,
Supplement,
Vol. I.,
p. 189.

- CHAP. XII. President to Major-General W. T. Sherman, and the gallant officers and soldiers of his command before Atlanta, for the distinguished ability, courage, and perseverance displayed in the campaign in Georgia which, under Divine favor, has resulted in the capture of Atlanta. The marches, battles, sieges, and other military operations that have signalized the campaign must render it famous in the annals of war, and have entitled those who have participated therein to the applause and thanks of the nation." Grant telegraphed Sherman from City Point, "In honor of your great victory, I have ordered a salute to be fired with shotted guns from every battery bearing upon the enemy. The salute will be fired within an hour amidst great rejoicing." Thus with the thunder of guns, with the ringing of bells, the tumultuous rejoicings of a great people, was celebrated this momentous victory.
- Report
Committee
on Conduct
of the War,
1865-66,
Supple-
ment,
Vol. I.,
p. 191.
- Ibid.

CHAPTER XIII

SHERIDAN IN THE SHENANDOAH

GENERAL GRANT had at last in command of the forces in the Shenandoah a soldier who possessed his utmost confidence and affection. Sheridan was then thirty-three years old; small and compact in stature, not carrying an ounce of superfluous flesh; unpretending in manner, but quick to exert all proper authority; absolutely at home in the saddle and seemingly incapable of fatigue; an eye for topography as keen and far-reaching as an eagle's; and that gift for inspiring immediate confidence in all around him which is the most inestimable of all possessions for a soldier. With all his relish for fighting and his brilliant record in action, he was no mere *sabreur*; he was as cool as he was courageous, as wise in planning as he was energetic in executing. He spent all the time that was necessary in thorough preparation, and, while in his hands one man was generally as good as one of the enemy, he always tried to have two men at the point of attack to his adversary's one. There was no luck in the splendid series of victories that attended his career in the Valley; they were all made ready in advance and honestly earned.

CH. XIII.

1864.

CH. XIII.

1864.

George E.
Pond,
"The
Shenan-
doah
Valley,"
p. 122.
Early,
"Memoir
of the
Last Year
of the
War,"
p. 75.

Anxious as the President and General Grant were that Sheridan should "put himself south of the enemy," and ardently as Sheridan sympathized in this desire, it was never to be accomplished; though brilliant successes awaited him, they were all to be gained over a brave and vigilant adversary, and all attacks had to be made in front. Sheridan, however, never gave up the hope with which he began of getting in rear of his enemy. At the very outset, while Early was still on the Potomac, he said, "I will strike for Winchester, which is the key, and pick up the parties on the north side of the Potomac"; and he moved out from Halltown with that intention on the morning of the 10th of August. But Imboden had, on the day before, reported to Early the concentration at Halltown; the latter at once began a retrograde movement; and while Sheridan was moving in admirable order, his cavalry guarding both flanks, the Sixth Corps on the right, the Eighth on the left, and the Nineteenth in the center, to take up a line between Clifton and Berryville, Early was hurrying back from Bunker Hill, through Winchester, up the Valley. He was, as usual with the Confederates in Virginia, better informed than his adversary. He knew Sheridan's strength, and he knew also that a large reënforcement was on its way from General Lee to enable him to defeat the National forces; while Sheridan had been expressly told by Grant on the 9th that "not one brigade had been sent" from Lee against him. Early therefore very properly declined the battle which Sheridan offered him on the banks of the Opequon, and fell back to meet his reënforcements further up the

Valley in the neighborhood of Strasburg; and Sheridan, not imagining upon what danger he was rushing, pursued Early with diligence, when he found he could not cut him off, and heavy skirmishing occurred at several points. CH. XIII.

The Confederates came to a halt at Fisher's Hill, two miles south of Strasburg, and assumed a strong position there. Early sent word to General R. H. Anderson, who, with Kershaw's division of infantry and Fitzhugh Lee's division of cavalry, was on the way to reënforce him, to move to Front Royal. Sheridan was soon informed of this movement of Anderson's, and it caused him great anxiety, as this was too important a force to be left on his left flank and rear in case he should attack Fisher's Hill in front. Although Sheridan's effective force amounted in all to some 30,000, his "effective line-of-battle strength at this time was," as he says in his report, "about 18,000 infantry and 3500 cavalry," not enough to risk a decisive battle with Early's force, increased not only by the Richmond contingent but by the remnants Averill had left of McCausland's house-burners. He therefore confined himself to skirmishing and thorough picket-searching of the enemy's lines, until, on the morning of the 14th, Colonel N. P. Chipman, escorted by a regiment of cavalry, galloped into camp from Washington with a dispatch from Grant announcing the departure of a heavy force from Lee's army to join Early. This time Grant exaggerated the true state of affairs; he said there were two divisions of infantry on the way, instead of one; an error which, however, he corrected two days later. He therefore enjoined

Aug. 12, 1864.

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Committee
on Conduct
of the War,
1865-66,
Supple-
ment,
Vol. II.,
p. 34.

Ibid.

CH. XIII.

Grant to
Halleck,
Aug. 12,
1864.

caution, and said Sheridan must act on the defensive until movements at Petersburg should draw Confederate troops away from the Valley. He did not think Early's force exceeded forty thousand men, but this was too much for Sheridan to attack; and when, on the 14th, he discovered that only one division of infantry had left his front, he still thought Sheridan had not a sufficient superiority in numbers to warrant an attack upon a fortified position. Sheridan, on receiving these orders, felt his situation to be somewhat critical. He was not justified in going forward; going backward was a delicate operation in the face of a watchful opponent, and there was not, in his opinion, which events afterwards justified, a good defensive position in the Valley south of the one at Halltown. He did the best that could be done under the circumstances; he retired from the Valley and gained a long start, before Early on the morning of the 17th perceived his departure.

Report
Committee
on Conduct
of the War,
1865-66,
Supple-
ment,
Vol. II.,
p. 35.

The Confederates set off at once in hot pursuit, Early from Strasburg and Anderson from Front Royal; the latter had a sharp brush with Wesley Merritt's cavalry, in which the Confederates were severely repulsed. Sheridan, who at first intended to halt at Winchester, concluding that the place was not defensible, moved back to Berryville where he had Snicker's Gap behind him, through which a reënforcement of two divisions was coming to him. He seized on the way all mules, horses, and cattle that could be of use to the army and ordered all subsistence and forage which could not be taken away to be destroyed; at the same time commanding that no

dwelling be burned. These orders were faithfully executed. The army moved with the precision of troops on parade back to the station assigned them, and afterwards, following a spirited fight near Charlestown between the Sixth Corps and Early's advance, took up the stronger position at Halltown. This once more left the lower Valley, as far as the Potomac, open to Early; there was nothing in his way but cavalry, and Sheridan had told Averill that he "rather desired that the enemy should cross the river." But Early did not accept the invitation; he went far enough to break up the railroad again, and Fitzhugh Lee once more watered his horses in the Potomac. There was more subsistence in the lower Valley than in the region which Sheridan had ravaged south of Winchester; so they remained there several days; there were frequent skirmishes between the cavalry of the two armies.

It seemed at one moment as if Maryland was again to be invaded. Leaving Anderson "to amuse the enemy," Early took the rest of his army and marched due north to Shepherdstown, handling Torbert's cavalry very roughly on the way, and cutting off Custer, who only saved his division by crossing the river. Sheridan hastily occupied the South Mountain gaps, and prepared to strike Early in the rear if he should take the road to Washington; but he probably had no such intention. He went back to Bunker Hill on the 27th, and Anderson, who had been closely pressed by Crook in a reconnaissance the day before, also fell back to Stephenson's Depot. Sheridan acted throughout these operations with the

CH. XIII.

Badeau,
"Military
History of
U. S.
Grant,"
Vol. III.,
p. 24.

Pond, "The
Shenan-
doah Val-
ley," p. 140.

1864.

greatest discretion and prudence, constantly resisting the numerous temptations to attack presented by Early's eccentric marches. Thus far he had been following Grant's suggestions in pursuing this waiting policy; but now Grant telegraphed him that in view of the destructive battles that had been raging on the Weldon road, he believed the force in the Valley would speedily be reduced for the benefit of Lee's army. "Watch closely," he said, "and if you find this theory correct, push with all vigor." He reiterated his orders to destroy everything that could assist the enemy, "If the war is to last another year, we want the Shenandoah Valley to remain a barren waste."

Sheridan now moved forward—August 28—with the same caution and perfect order which had characterized all his marches, to take up again the line from Clifton to Berryville, which he accomplished on the 3d of September. The same day Averill struck his old enemy, McCausland, another stunning blow at Bunker Hill; but on the following day was himself driven from the place by Rodes's infantry. All this while Sheridan had been patiently waiting for the detachment of Confederate troops from his front, which both Grant and he expected as a consequence of the heavy losses Lee had suffered near Petersburg. This move of the enemy, so ardently desired by Sheridan, would have taken place at this juncture if the march of the National troops had not prevented it. On the 26th of August General Lee had written to Early, informing him that he was in great need of Anderson's troops at Richmond, if they could be spared from the Valley; and after consultation with

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Early, Anderson moved on the 3d of September upon Berryville for the purpose of crossing the Blue Ridge at Ashby's Gap. But at that point, late in the day, he ran unawares upon Crook's corps, which had just arrived, and which barred his way to the mountains. A brisk engagement ensued, lasting as long as the opposing armies could see each other. Early hurried down at dawn to Anderson's assistance and found him even yet ignorant of what was before him, an ignorance which was shared by Early, both of them thinking it was a Federal detachment raiding towards their rear. Early left one division on Anderson's left, and hurried with the rest of his force to what he imagined was the Union right flank, thinking to make short work of it; but after moving for two miles and finding no flank, he came to an elevated outlook and discovered to his dismay the Union army stretching to his left as far as his best glasses would reach. He rejoined Anderson and they both retreated hastily to the west side of the Opequon. If Sheridan had been a few hours less expeditious in occupying Berryville, Anderson would have been on his way to Lee, and Early would have been left to his mercy a fortnight earlier than actually happened.

For ten days he held his lines with admirable persistence and patience, exercising his cavalry in constant skirmishes, harassing and damaging the enemy more or less every day. He kept himself six miles away from the Opequon, the west bank of which was occupied by the enemy, holding this vacant space with scouting parties, preferring not to advertise his intended movement by occupying

CH. XIII. it with his main force. At last his long self-restraint and tenacity of purpose were rewarded. On the Sept., 1864. 14th, as everything seemed quiet in front, and Early had begun to think lightly of an adversary apparently so languid, General Anderson again started for Lee's army, crossing the mountains by way of Front Royal, it is needless to say, without molestation. Sheridan received information of this movement on the night of the 15th, and with every energy of mind and body on the alert, prepared to seize the inestimable chance of the hour.

Lincoln to
Grant,
Sept. 12,
1864. MS.

The President was extremely anxious that a move should be made. Three days before he had made this suggestion to Grant: "Sheridan and Early are facing each other at a dead-lock. Could we not pick up a regiment here and there, to the number of say ten thousand men, and quietly but suddenly concentrate them at Sheridan's camp and enable him to make a strike?" Not only was the opportunity a great one; the need was great also. At the very moment when Anderson's column was marching out of its camps, Halleck was telegraphing to Grant that the long-continued interruption of the Ohio and Chesapeake and Baltimore and Ohio Railroads was threatening a dearth of fuel in Washington and Baltimore; the gas companies feared they would be compelled to stop their works; if Sheridan was not strong enough to break Early's hold on the railroad, he should be reënforced. The long inactivity of the Army of the Shenandoah was beginning to attract the ready criticism of the Northern press; the enemies of the Government were using it in the hot canvass then going forward as an argument for a change of Administration.

Yet—as General Grant says in his report—the consequences of a defeat at that time would have been so serious, laying open to the enemy the States of Maryland and Pennsylvania for long distances, that he hesitated to allow the initiative to be taken. In this state of perplexity he left Petersburg and hastened to Sheridan's camp. He found the young general so sure of his ground, so cool, and yet so eager, that he “saw there were but two words of instructions necessary: “Go in!” and with these words, leaving Sheridan to himself, Grant started to New Jersey to put his children to school.

Sheridan's first intention had been to move to Newtown, on the valley pike, giving up his own line, and taking that of the enemy. This would have been a move of extraordinary boldness and brilliancy, and if successful would have involved the destruction of Early's army.¹ But on the 18th he learned that Early had, on the day before, with almost incredible carelessness, gone with half his army to Martinsburg, intent, with that fixed idea which was almost a mania with him, on breaking up a party which was repairing the railroad. On the receipt of this news Sheridan instantly changed his plan, seeing before him the safer prospect of catching Early in his sin and destroying the two halves of his army in succession. He was not, however, to have so easy a victory. Early had heard at Martinsburg of Grant's visit, and, conclud-

CH. XIII.

Sept. 15,
1864.Grant,
“Personal
Memoirs.”
Vol. II,
p. 583.

¹ “Had Sheridan by a prompt movement thrown his whole force on the line of my communications, I would have been compelled to attempt to cut my way through, as there was no escape for me to the right or left, and my force was too weak to cross the Potomac while he was in my rear.”

Early,
“Memoir
of the Last
Year of the
War,”
p. 84.

CH. XIII. ing that there would soon be a movement, hurried back with his troops to Stephenson's Depot, only four miles from Winchester, in the neighborhood of which place his whole force was concentrated the next morning. Sheridan encountered, therefore, double the number he expected; but the excellence of his plans and the spirit of his troops brought him into the battle with all the omens on his side.

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1864.

His army was early afoot. The day was fine, and at the first flush of dawn they marched across the neutral ground which stretched from the Union lines to the Opequon. Wilson, crossing the creek with his cavalry before daylight, hurried through the Berryville cañon, some two miles long, carried by assault the earthworks which guarded its western entrance, and then took position on the extreme left flank. The infantry followed rapidly; the Sixth Corps deploying on the open, rolling ground to the front and left of the defile, and the Nineteenth on the right. The position was about two miles from Winchester; a Confederate division under Ramseur was drawn up in front of the town, and every movement of the Union troops was effected under heavy fire. It was noon before all necessary dispositions were completed and the line was ready to advance. By this time Rodes and Gordon had been hurried down from Stephenson's Depot, and placed in line, in the order named, upon Ramseur's left.

The sun was crossing the meridian as the line moved forward across the open fields against the enemy who were posted in a belt of woods. Wilson, on the left, struck the cavalry force of L. L. Lomax

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1864.

and forced him back; Wright, with the Sixth Corps, advancing on the pike, engaged Ramseur and Rodes, gaining ground constantly; Cuvier Grover's division of the Nineteenth Corps pushed forward against Gordon and drove the enemy with such impetuosity as to break the continuity of the Union line. The advance on the right was stopped by a terrific fire from Braxton's guns; and C. A. Battle's fresh brigade of Rodes's division, which arrived at that moment from Stephenson's, charged at the broken point of junction between the Sixth and Nineteenth Corps, and for a moment drove back the center and checked the advance of the whole line. In this charge General Rodes lost his life—a damage not compensated by the momentary success. The tide was instantly turned by a charge of equal gallantry from the National side attended by an equal calamity. A brigade of General D. A. Russell's division, led by Russell and Upton in person, rushed with splendid courage and swiftness into the gap, struck the advancing Confederates in flank, driving them back and taking many prisoners, and reestablished the Union line—but the gallant and devoted Russell fell dead at the moment of his victory.

Up to this time Crook had been held in reserve; it had been Sheridan's original intention to throw him in upon the left to turn the Confederate right, seize the Valley pike south of Winchester, and cut off Early's retreat; and for a while, even after he had discovered that he was fighting Early's whole army, he hoped to accomplish this object. But the energy of the attack upon the Union right at last convinced him that it would be best to turn the

Confederate left at whatever cost, and this task was assigned to Crook's force. He moved forward at once along the line of the Red Bud, a little rivulet which bounded the battlefield on the north, as Abraham's Run bounded it on the south. H. F. Duval's division took the north side of the stream and Joseph Thoburn's the south, and they moved together with irresistible momentum against the bit of woods in which General Gordon's troops were posted.

There was no withstanding the rush of this fresh and compact force, and Gordon was driven back towards Winchester. The Union cavalry were at this juncture swarming in upon the Confederate left. Torbert, Merritt, and Averill had been fighting all day, with various degrees of success, on all the roads running north from Stephenson's; they had driven the Confederate cavalry pell-mell before them and had finally dislodged Breckinridge's infantry from its advanced position and forced it in upon Winchester. While this cloud of hostile horsemen was hovering upon his left, in the open country to his right Early could see the threatening advance of Wilson's column in the direction of the pike; and in his front, Wright and Emory, under Sheridan's personal orders, were executing a left half wheel of the whole line of battle to support the victorious charge of Crook. In this desperate emergency Early behaved with remarkable coolness and skill. Defeat was inevitable; his whole line was breaking and retiring. But he held off the cavalry as well as he could, on both flanks, detached a force to the rear to guard his trains, and availed himself of an old line of

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CH. XIII. breastworks, just outside of Winchester, to rally once more his disordered battalions. But all efforts to retrieve the day were fruitless. The Union cavalry once more swooped around the left flank of the Confederate lines; the noise of battle in their rear was too much for the nerves of the men in the breastworks. They left their shelter, and poured, a fluid mass, through Winchester and up the Valley by the open pike.

Ramseur's division still maintained its organization, and being formed on the east and south of the town covered the retreat until nightfall. The Sixth Corps occupied the road parallel to the one by which Early was escaping but could not efficiently pursue him. There is a limit to human endurance, and these troops had been for fifteen hours on foot, marching and fighting. The reserve had been put into action on the right and no flank movement was possible from that side. The cavalry followed up the pike to Kernstown and came in contact with Ramseur, who still held firm in the rear; but as night came on the pursuit ceased, and the beaten Confederates marched on through the darkness to Strasburg.

The list of the casualties shows how fierce was the fighting in this fairly won battle. The loss on the Union side was nearly 5000, 4300 of whom were killed and wounded. Among the killed was the lamented Russell; among the wounded were Generals E. Upton, J. B. McIntosh, and G. H. Chapman, and Colonels Isaac H. Duval and Jacob Sharpe. Early's loss was less, about 4000, and 2000 of these were prisoners; he lost heavily in valuable officers, Generals R. E. Rodes and A. C. Godwin, and



GENERAL FITZHUGH LEE.

Colonel W. T. Patton, killed; Generals Fitzhugh Lee and Zebulon York, severely wounded. As the Union troops were constantly attacking and always in the open field, their heavier losses in killed and wounded are readily accounted for. The victory was one of the most important of the war. The country had become restive and impatient at the succession of costly and unremunerative battles which Grant had delivered in Virginia. The advance of Early to the walls of Washington and his unpunished retreat, his long visit to the lower Valley, his incendiary raids in Maryland and Pennsylvania, had brought the public mind to a point of exasperation which had in it a serious danger to the Union cause. This brilliant victory of Sheridan, unpromised and unheralded, prepared with infinite prudence and pains, and then carried through with such dash and valor, was greeted with an outburst of patriotic joy. Sheridan's dispatch, with its trooper-like phrase, "We have just sent them whirling through Winchester, and we are after them to-morrow," became a household word in a few hours after it was written.

Grant fired a hundred guns from each of his armies at Petersburg and urged Sheridan to "push his success." The President appointed the young hero a brigadier-general in the regular army and placed him in permanent command of the Middle Division; and sent him a telegram, the manuscript of which hangs framed in his house, a rich legacy to his children: "Have just heard of your great victory. God bless you all, officers and men. Strongly inclined to come up and see you. — A. LINCOLN."

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It was, in fact, not easy to exaggerate the importance of Sheridan's achievement. By patiently biding his time, by restraining his own spirit which was naturally ardent and enterprising, until he saw a prospect of almost certain success, and then by striking with all his might, he had rendered an inestimable service, at a time when it was much needed. The lower Valley was by the battle of the Opequon permanently rescued from Confederate control; its loyal inhabitants saved from further spoliation; its rich harvests garnered in peace; the railroads and canals restored to traffic. The National capital was never again subject to threat or insult from an enemy; the soil of Pennsylvania and Maryland was never again trodden by a hostile foot.

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Early established himself on the 20th two miles south of Strasburg at Fisher's Hill, the strongest defensive position in the Valley. His right, under Wharton, was protected by the hill and by the north fork of the Shenandoah; his left, the dismounted cavalry under Lomax, was posted at the base of Little North Mountain; the interval was filled by Gordon's, Ramseur's, and Pegram's divisions, in the order named, from right to left. Fitzhugh Lee's cavalry, now under W. C. Wickham, was posted at Millford, in the Luray Valley, to guard against a movement on the Confederate right and rear — a precaution, as it turned out, of the greatest value. Thus posted, General Early felt himself secure, hoping that Sheridan would arrive, look at his position, and retire, as had happened a month before. But a very different spirit now animated the two armies. The moment the National troops

Early,
"Memoir
of the Last
Year of the
War,"
p. 99.

arrived, on the afternoon of the 20th, they began to take up positions which could mean nothing but aggression. All that Early could see in the way of gradual approach and careful reconnaissance convinced him at last that he would have to endure an energetic attack; but what was going on out of his sight was more serious still. Sheridan was engaged during the 21st in posting Wright and Emory, the one on the right, the other on the left, as near as convenient to the enemy, and succeeded in occupying, after a sharp skirmish with troops of the Sixth Corps, the high ground on the north of Tumbling Run, a swift brook which ran directly in front of the Confederate position. When this point had been gained, it was quickly fortified, and there was a certain comfort to General Early in the sound of the pioneers' axes and in the work of the engineers under his very eyes. He began, he says, to think Sheridan "was satisfied with the advantage he had gained and would not probably press it further." But Sheridan, instantly on arriving, had resolved to repeat his tactics of the 19th, and send Crook round the enemy's left flank. With admirable silence and secrecy this was accomplished, without the knowledge of Early's vigilant lookout on Three Top Mountain. Crook, with the Eighth Corps, gained the flank of Little North Mountain, and then stole along its rugged side, under cover of the woods, until he came upon the Confederate left and rear.

In the mean while, Ricketts's division of the Sixth Corps was thrown well forward and to the left of the Confederate center, producing the impression that the attack would be made from that direction.

CH. XIII.
Sept., 1864.

Early,
"Memoir of
the Last
Year of the
War,"
p. 99.

Sheridan,
Report,
Feb. 3, 1866.

General Early, who, in his ordinary frame of mind, would have welcomed such an attack as he saw himself threatened with, now only wished for night to come, and gave orders for his troops to retire after dark. The sun had already set, and he did not dream that a battle and defeat could come to him in the short hour of twilight. But the time was ample. Suddenly, with no more warning than the lightning gives, Crook burst upon the division of Lomax, taking their works in reverse and putting them to disordered flight. Ricketts immediately joined hands with him, and the rest of Wright's and Emory's men poured like a torrent into the ravine of Tumbling Run, and swarmed up its further slope with an irresistible rush. The whole Confederate line yielded its formidable position almost without striking a blow. "After a very brief contest," says Early, "my whole force retired in considerable confusion." The two defeats exerted their cumulative force upon them. They were so amazed at Crook's sudden apparition that they imagined he had come over the mountains and taken the pike in their rear, and great numbers therefore broke in dismay and disorder to escape on the right by the north fork of the Massanutten range.

The rout on the battlefield was complete; sixty guns were abandoned in the flight of the Confederates, and a thousand prisoners were taken. The rest escaped in the darkness; and if the cavalry which had been sent under Torbert, down the Luray Valley, could have executed their orders to cross by Massanutten Gap to New Market, Early's whole army would have been captured or destroyed. But they found Wickham strongly posted at Mill-

CH. XIII.

Early,
"Memoir
of the Last
Year of the
War,"
p. 99.

Ibid.

Ibid.,
p. 100.

Sept. 22,
1864.

CH. XIII. ford, and Torbert, knowing nothing of the battle and victory at Fisher's Hill, did not feel justified in making the sacrifice which would have been required to carry the lines by assault. When the news came, it was too late to profit by it. Early was driven up the Valley at headlong speed, but pursuing infantry never overtake infantry who are running for their lives, and even the cavalry engaged in this stern chase touched Early's rear guard only once or twice. He marched with the greatest expedition up the Valley to New Market, but instead of going on to Harrisonburg he turned to the east and took the Keezeltown road to Port Republic and Brown's Gap, where he arrived on the 25th, and where shelter and succor awaited him.

Sept., 1864.

CHAPTER XIV

CEDAR CREEK

GENERAL LEE had recognized the error of the detachment of R. H. Anderson when it was too late to be remedied. In fact he had never been urgent in his demands for those troops; he had merely represented to Early his pressing need and asked for them if they could be spared. Writing just before the battle of the Opequon when—although he did not know it—the detachment was already on the march, he said, “I wish you to defeat Sheridan if your strength is sufficient. He seems disposed to protect himself under his intrenchments. If you could draw him up the Valley”—this proved an easy task—“and fall upon him suddenly or throw a body of troops behind him you might succeed in defeating him.” After the battle had been fought and lost, Early, in the angry candor of defeat, wrote from Port Republic that Sheridan’s superiority in cavalry and the inefficiency of the Confederate horse had been the cause of his disaster; that the first trouble at Fisher’s Hill would “have been remedied if the troops had remained steady, but a panic seized them at the idea of being flanked, and without being defeated they broke, many of them

CHAP. XIV.

1864.

Lee
to Early,
Sept. 17,
1864.

CHAP. XIV.

Early
to Lee,
Sept. 25,
1864. Pond,
"The
Shenan-
doah
Valley,"
p. 184.

fleeing shamefully. The artillery was not captured by the enemy, but abandoned by the infantry." On the receipt of this letter, in which the beaten general unpacked his heart with such bitter words against his unfortunate soldiers, Lee at once ordered all available force to his support, Kershaw's infantry and Rosser's cavalry, besides promising the coöperation of Breckinridge; and wrote a letter of kindly and cheerful encouragement. "I very much regret the reverses that have occurred in the Valley, but trust they can be remedied. The arrival of Kershaw will add greatly to your strength. . . It will require that every one should exert all his energies and strength to meet the emergency. One victory will put all things to rights. . . Manceuvre so, if you can, as to keep the enemy in check until you can strike him with all your strength." He urged upon him a policy of concentration and the utmost vigilance; told him he had sent him all the reserves in the Valley. "The enemy must be defeated and I rely upon you to do it. . . Set all your officers to work bravely and hopefully and all will go well. . . The enemy's force cannot be so greatly superior to yours. His effective infantry I do not think exceeds 12,000 men"; an estimate somewhat under the truth, but far nearer to it than the frantic exaggeration of Early.

Lee
to Early,
Sept. 27,
1864.
Long,
"Memoirs
of
R. E. Lee,"
p. 660.

Sheridan,
Report of
Operations
from
Aug. 4, 1864,
to Feb. 27,
1865.

The question that now presented itself to Sheridan was whether or not he should follow the enemy to Brown's Gap, drive him out, and advance on Charlottesville and Gordonsville. He could, of course, have done nothing which would have been more agreeable to Grant; but he was sufficiently

secure in the confidence and regard of his commander to follow his own judgment, and he acted with his usual intelligence and prudence in deciding against the move. He saw that a considerable force would have been required to protect the new line from Alexandria, another to guard the Valley. "Then," as he said, "there was the additional reason of the uncertainty as to whether the army in front of Petersburg could hold the entire force of General Lee there, and, in case it could not, a sufficient number might be detached and moved rapidly by rail and overwhelm me, quickly returning." It is a remarkable coincidence that at the very moment when Sheridan was balancing these considerations in his mind and wisely acting upon them, the President was sending this dispatch to General Grant. "I hope it will have no constraint on you, nor do harm any way, for me to say I am a little afraid lest Lee sends reënforcements to Early, and thus enables him to turn upon Sheridan." Lincoln and Sheridan took precisely the same view of the matter, which was correct, though it was not the view taken at first by Grant, who thought he could prevent any reënforcement being sent by Lee from Richmond.

Having resolved upon terminating his campaign at Harrisonburg, and sending a part of his army back to Petersburg, a course which received the approval of General Grant in consideration of the needs of the Army of the Potomac, after Deep Bottom and the extension of his lines to the Weldon road, Sheridan thoroughly devastated the upper Valley and destroyed such bridges as were within his reach, and on the 6th of October began

CHAP. XIV.

Report
Committee
on Conduct
of the War,
1865-66.
Supple-
ment,
Vol. II.,
p. 41.

Lincoln to
Grant,
Sept. 29,
1864. MS.

CHAP. XIV. his retrograde movement, capturing or destroying all subsistence as he went, but giving the most stringent orders against burning dwellings. Early, taking renewed heart both from his strong and welcome reënforcements in horse, foot, and artillery, and from the supposed retreat of his enemy, followed, his cavalry being in advance, in what he imagined was a hot pursuit. On the evening of the 8th, having arrived at Fisher's Hill, Sheridan ordered Torbert to engage and defeat the Confederate cavalry at daylight, which was done with great energy and thoroughness. T. L. Rosser, who had succeeded Wickham in the command of Fitzhugh Lee's division, and Lomax were utterly routed, after a short engagement, losing, as Sheridan said, "everything they had on wheels," and running for twenty miles.

Early,
"Memoir of
the Last
Year of the
War,"
p. 105.

The next day Sheridan crossed Cedar Creek and went into camp on the north bank; it was his intention to send the Sixth Corps from this point to join Grant at Petersburg, and the march, by way of Ashby's Gap, was actually begun; but Early, having again advanced and resumed his position at Fisher's Hill, Wright was brought back to await further developments. At this moment Grant once more reverted to his favorite idea of a movement on Gordonsville and of the establishment of a base for that purpose in the vicinity of Manassas Gap; Sheridan, not agreeing as to its advisability, after some correspondence with General Halleck, in compliance with an invitation from the Secretary of War started for Washington for a consultation on the evening of the 15th; believing that the enemy could not accomplish much in his absence

Sheridan,
Report of
Operations
from
Aug. 4, 1864,
to Feb. 27,
1865.

and not thinking best to attack him at Fisher's Hill. He took with him all the cavalry, intending to push it through Chester Gap to Charlottesville, while he went on to Washington by rail. But on arriving at Front Royal he received a telegram from General Wright, who had been left in command at Cedar Creek, indicating that an attack was expected from Early. Sheridan therefore sent the cavalry back to Wright, and proceeded on his way to Washington. He arrived there on the 17th, left the same day, and reached Winchester on the evening of the 18th. All being quiet he spent the night there, and the next morning rode tranquilly out of the town on the way to his army. About nine o'clock he was startled by the sound of heavy artillery firing, and immediately after found to his dismay the road filled with fugitives in blue uniforms, "trains and men coming to the rear with appalling rapidity." A great disaster seemed in progress—but out of this disaster was to emerge for him an immortal renown.

General Early, finding himself by the total destruction of provisions in the Valley reduced to the alternative of fighting or retreating, had resolved to attack Sheridan in his position. In planning his attack he had one enormous advantage; from his signal station at the point where the Massanutten range comes to an end above the Shenandoah, his topographical officers could scan the Union camps like a map, and mark every road, every ford, and every intrenchment for miles around. The point from which General Wright eventually expected an attack to come was on his right, where the Back road crossed the shallow

CHAP. XIV.

Oct., 1864.

Sheridan,
in Report
Committee
on Conduct
of the War.
1865-66.
Supple-
ment,
Vol. II.,
pp. 43, 44.

CHAP. XIV. rivulet, and he had taken his measures accordingly. But Early discovered that by crossing the north fork of the Shenandoah he could move down the eastern bank, through fields occupied by his cavalry, by a narrow pathway at the foot of the mountain, and crossing again by a ford below the mouth of Cedar Creek, could come in upon the rear of the left flank of the Union army. He therefore resolved upon this scheme, and made his preparations with creditable skill and energy. He placed this flanking force, consisting of three divisions, Gordon, Ramseur, and Pegram, under Gordon, and as soon as it was dark on the night of the 18th sent him across the river with orders to be in position to attack by five o'clock in the morning — a little before daybreak.

Oct., 1864.

He himself moved an hour after midnight, with Kershaw's and Wharton's divisions, by the turnpike through Strasburg, leaving orders for the artillery to wait until the last moment, and then to gallop down the pike, as he wished to avoid giving the alarm by the rumbling of the wheels over the macadam. It is a curious instance of the personal malevolence which had grown up in his mind against his adversary, that a part of his plan embraced the seizure of Sheridan in his headquarters by a strong force of cavalry. The march was accomplished with perfect success. Early's own column separated at Strasburg. Wharton continued on the pike with orders not to show himself until the attack was made on the left, and Early remained with Kershaw, who bore off to the right to attack Crook's left flank at Bowman's Mill, while Gordon came in on his rear. They came in sight

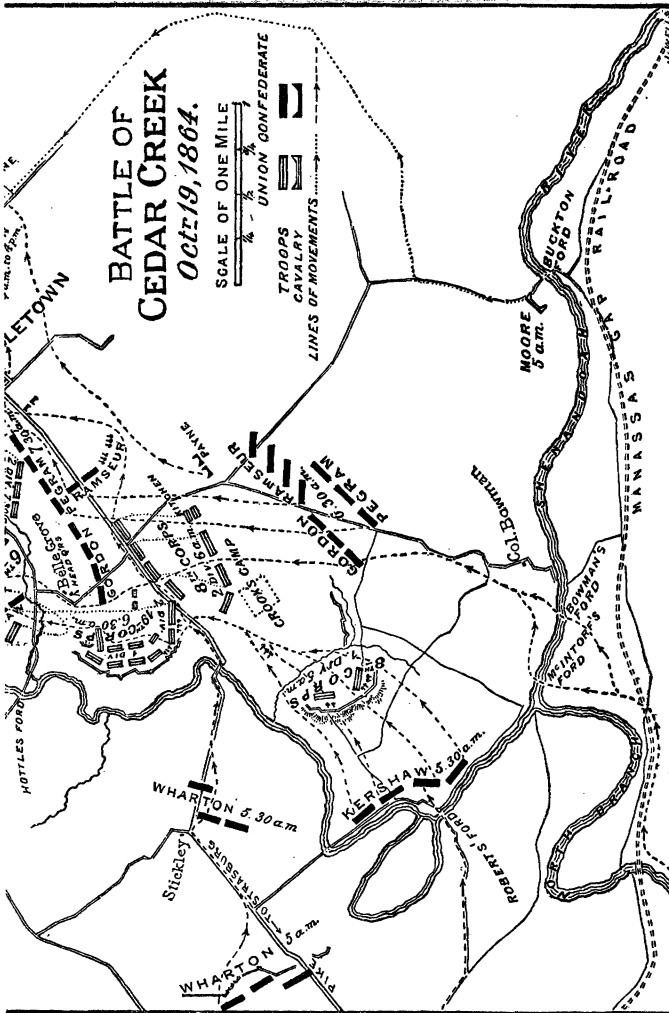
Early,
"Memoir of
the Last
Year of the
War,"
p. 110.

of the Union campfires at three o'clock ; the moon gave sufficient light to guide their march. With unbounded joy and confidence Early saw his enemy apparently delivered into his hands; he gave his final commands at his leisure, and at half-past four, the distant sound of carbines having been heard on his left, where Rosser's cavalry was attacking Custer, and a rattle of musketry from the right, which showed that Gordon was brushing the pickets away from the ford, he sent Kershaw forward. His division, veiled by the mist of the morning, poured like phantoms over Crook's intrenchments, capturing seven guns and turning them on their flying owners, and the troops in camp suddenly aroused out of sleep.

The surprise was perfect;¹ Crook's soldiers were good ones, but they had been in battle often enough to know the best thing they could do, under the circumstances, was to go ; though General Thoburn, the gallant commander of the first division, lost his life in an attempt to stem the disaster. The second division, under a general who afterwards commanded the armies and navies of the United States, Rutherford B. Hayes, held firm after the first had melted away, and Wright, Crook, and Emory, roused by the tumult, speedily formed a line to resist Kershaw's advance, which would doubtless have been effective had it not been that the moment it was ready

¹ General Wright, in his report, written November 27, 1865, says that a reconnaissance sent out by Crook on the 18th reported the enemy retreating, and that this report, spreading through the camp, had probably lulled

the troops into unusual security. Sheridan, in his "Memoirs" (Vol. II., p. 96), says, with equal justice and generosity: "The surprise of the morning might have befallen me as well as the general on whom it did descend."



CHAP. XIV. Gordon, with his three divisions, came thundering in from the left and rear, out of a heavy fog which
Oct. 19, 1864. had favored his march from the river. The rest of Crook's corps, under this unexpected and terrific onslaught, streamed away to the right and rear; and left the Nineteenth Corps uncovered and wholly unprepared for resistance. General Wright, seeing the serious disadvantage of attempting to hold his original line with the enemy on the flank of the Nineteenth Corps, at once ordered Getty to take the Sixth Corps, which was intact and in perfect condition, to tenable ground in the rear, and directed Emory to fall back and take position on the right of the Sixth. These orders were promptly executed, and from the moment the tide of battle struck the heroic Sixth Corps the current of Confederate victory was stayed; for although they withdrew first to a point west of Middletown, and afterwards to one north of that place, they fought with undaunted energy, and, making Early pay dearly for every foot gained, finally brought him to a stand.

But at first a great victory seemed secured to him. As soon as he saw Crook's intrenchments carried by Kershaw's rush, he rode to the left, where Wharton and the artillery had arrived, and there heard the welcome racket of Gordon's musketry in the rear of the Union lines. The sun was rising, and it must have seemed to him the sun of Austerlitz, as he ordered Wharton forward and riding in advance of him over the stream met Gordon on the opposite hill. The success had not been gained gratis, for Gordon reported to his chief that the fighting had been severe. But Crook and



GENERAL HORATIO G. WRIGHT.

Emory, so far as he could judge, were in complete rout, and he anticipated an easy task in the demolition of the Sixth Corps. Ramseur and Pegram told him their divisions were in line confronting it, but that there was a vacancy on their right which should be filled; he ordered Wharton's fresh division forward for that purpose. But in a very short time, to his great disappointment, "Wharton's division," he says, "came back in some confusion." They had gone gallantly in, expecting to share in the pursuit of fugitives, but they were greeted with a withering fire from Getty's division — under command of "Vermont" [Lewis A.] Grant — before which they staggered; upon this Grant's troops rushed out from their position and drove the Confederates headlong down the hill; Early's artillery now opened with a furious fire, which checked the counter-charge. General Bidwell, who had made the gallant sortie from the works at Washington a few months before, fell mortally wounded at this point.

CHAP. XIV.

Oct. 19, 1864.

Early,
"Memoir of
the Last
Year of the
War,"
p. 113.

It was now nine o'clock; the sun had dispersed the fogs of the morning; the sanguine energy of the Confederate attack was constantly diminishing. The defense of the Union officers was becoming more coherent. They were not yet, however, ready to advance, nor even sure of holding their own; and in face of the powerful artillery of Early which was in full action, and of evident preparations for assault on the Confederate left, Wright withdrew his troops to a point north of Middletown, where he established them in a good position and awaited Early's attack behind hastily improvised defenses. Early came on with as much

Oct. 19, 1864.

CHAP. XIV. speed as possible, intent upon finishing his day's work, and when he arrived in front of Wright's new lines he sent pressing orders to his division commanders to attack. But his aides came back to him from every part of the field with surprisingly unsatisfactory reports. Kershaw said, "His division was not in condition to make the attack, as it was very much scattered, and there was a cavalry force threatening him in front." Gordon's division, an aide reported, was not fit to attack and he had not delivered the order. Early says he himself had seen a number of men plundering the captured camps, and this disorder increased all day. Both on the right and the left the Union cavalry was strong, and the recollection of their work at Fisher's Hill gave Early great concern for his flanks.

Early,
"Memoir of
the Last
Year of the
War,"
p. 112.

This uneasiness so grew upon him that when, at last, on Gordon coming up, he ordered him to attack, in consideration of the strength of the Union cavalry, he told Gordon, if the enemy's line seemed too strong, not to make the assault, and Gordon, availing himself of that proviso, did not assault. "It was now apparent," says General Early, "that it would not do to press my troops further. They had been up all night and were much jaded. In passing over rough ground to attack the enemy in the early morning, their own ranks had been much disordered, and the men scattered, and it had required time to re-form them. Their ranks, moreover, were much thinned by the absence of the men engaged in plundering the enemy's camps. . ." In this state of things the only preoccupation of the Confederate general was to get

Ibid., p. 115.

safely away from the field with his spoil. His prisoners, some fourteen hundred, had already been sent to the rear on the way to Richmond and he hoped, by holding his line until nightfall, to be able either to retire in safety or rally his disordered columns for new successes. But the choice of advance or retreat was no longer his; he had reached his highest tide of achievement; a swift and final ebb was to follow. The initiative had already passed into younger and abler hands than his own; Sheridan had arrived at the lines in his front.

CHAP. XIV.

He had ridden, with an escort of twenty men, devouring the ground, for twelve miles amid the horrid signs of defeat that incumbered the road: giving orders all the way to stop the stragglers, to park the guns; appealing with vehement energy to the fugitives to turn from the way of dishonor to their duty; and to use his own admirable phrase, "Hundreds of the men, who on reflection found they had not done themselves justice, came back with cheers." Arriving at the front he was received with an indescribable tumult of joy; he found the Sixth Corps and the cavalry intact; all the horse and Getty's division of infantry opposing the enemy and two other divisions about two miles to the right and rear. He immediately took command, Wright resuming charge of the Sixth Corps and Getty that of his own division. Sheridan ordered all the troops in the rear up to Getty's line, where he proposed to make his fight, and with his fiery and contagious energy began to put everything in shape for battle. He sent Custer's cavalry back to the right; ordered a line of battle to be

Oct. 19, 1864.

Sheridan,
Report.

CHAP. XIV. formed prolonging that of Getty; his ride to the front on his well-known black charger had caused the men to reflect, and the first fruit of their reflection was that they came back—not merely by hundreds but by thousands¹—and filled up the depleted ranks of the regiments in line. So that the strange spectacle was presented, of an army surprised and beaten in the morning, forced back four miles, then suddenly recovering its tone and spirit, and actually increasing its effective strength, while the victorious enemy grew weaker and more languid every hour. When Early made his last ineffective attack about one o'clock it was readily repulsed by the Nineteenth Corps and part of the Sixth.

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But Sheridan was not satisfied with repulsing the enemy. As he galloped up the Valley he had shouted to his troops, "We are going to get back those camps and those guns!" and at four o'clock he felt that he was ready to keep his word. He gave the order to advance, riding up and down the lines in the midst of tempestuous cheering, and the whole command sprang forward with an impulse which made victory secure in advance. Wright was on the left, Emory on the right, Crook in column in reserve; Custer and Merritt led the cavalry on the right and left flanks respectively. One spirit animated the whole mass, and there was no beating them back. Their advance was by no means unopposed. Early had protected his lines with breastworks, and in front of Emory a vigor-

¹ Colonel B. W. Crowninshield the command of General Crook, says two thousand men of all then on the extreme left and corps came with him from near rear. See Pond, "The Shenandoah," p. 236.

ous resistance was made. The Confederate flank here overlapped the Union right; but a charge by James W. McMillan's brigade into the reëntering angle thus formed broke the rebel line; Gordon's brigades, mindful of former terrible experiences on the left flank, crumbled away one by one, communicating their confusion to the right as the rest of the line was attacked; and Wright's corps moved forward driving the enemy before them. Merritt's cavalry charged through Middletown, sweeping the roads on the left, but meeting a heavy loss in the death of Colonel Charles Russell Lowell, of the Reserve Brigade (composed for the most part of Regular troops), a young officer of the noblest character and the most brilliant accomplishments.¹

Early speaks with perhaps undeserved severity of the conduct of his own troops: "Every effort was made to stop and rally Kershaw's and Ramseur's men, but the mass of them resisted all appeals, and continued to go to the rear without waiting for any effort to retrieve the partial disorder." Ramseur himself opposed a bold front to inevitable disaster, and, gathering a few hundred brave men together, fought till he fell mortally wounded. Wharton and Pegram on the pike were the last to give way, but once started their commands also went to pieces, and the rout was complete. The National infantry pursued no farther than Hupp's Hill, but the cavalry of Custer and Devin dashed upon the fugitives. At a little brook, near Fisher's Hill, a bridge broke down, and the road was instantly blocked;

CHAP. XIV.

Oct. 19, 1864.

Early,
"Memoir of
the Last
Year of the
War,"
p. 118.

¹ "I do not think there was perfection of a man and a soldier. a quality which I could have added to Lowell. He was the

"P. H. SHERIDAN."

CHAP. XIV. here the cavalry reaped a rich harvest of guns, caissons, wagons, and ambulances. All the captured cannon of the morning were recovered, and two dozen more taken. The disorganized force of Early fled in wild confusion up the Valley through the night and the next day, never stopping till they got to New Market. He had lost in this battle which was so admirably planned, and which opened so auspiciously, about 3000 men, of whom he reports 1860 as killed and wounded. The Union loss was in all 5665, the loss in killed and wounded being far heavier than that of the Confederates. But the net result was vastly in favor of the National arms. The veteran force of Early, composed of as fine troops as the Confederacy could furnish, was so completely defeated in this battle that it never again as a whole did an efficient day's work.

1864.

The victory of Cedar Creek, gained after a day of such dramatic incidents and contrasts, was received throughout the country with tumultuous enthusiasm. It gave Sheridan not only the immense popularity which he always retained, but also a place in the confidence of the Government and of the troops, which greatly increased his efficiency and value. Grant said this action "stamped Sheridan, what I have always thought him, one of the ablest of generals." Meade generously joined in unmeasured praise of him. Congress and State Legislatures exhausted the language of eulogy in their resolutions. The President immediately sent a dispatch, saying, "With great pleasure I tender to you and your brave army the thanks of the nation, and my own personal admiration and gratitude, for the month's operations in the Shenandoah

Valley; and especially for the splendid work of October 19, 1864"; and the highest guerdon in the gift of the nation was to follow. On November 8 Sheridan was appointed a major-general in the regular army, and his commission was accompanied by words, dictated by Mr. Lincoln, of the warmest and most cordial appreciation of "the personal gallantry, military skill, and just confidence in the courage and patriotism of your troops, displayed by you on the 19th day of October at Cedar Run, whereby, under the blessing of Providence, your routed army was reorganized, a great National disaster averted, and a brilliant victory achieved over the rebels for the third time, in pitched battle, within thirty days."

CHAP. XIV.

Oct. 22,
1864. MS.

Thoroughly defeated as he was, however, Early had lost very little of his numerical strength; and the convalescents and conscripts who were sent to him during the weeks he remained at New Market, together with George B. Cosby's brigade, which reinforced him from Southwestern Virginia, more than made up all his losses. Rosser guarded the Valley at Stony Creek, a few miles below Mt. Jackson, and Lomax held the Luray road at the strongly fortified post at Millford. In these circumstances the Shenandoah could not be left undefended, and the movement of troops to Grant, which had been checked by Early's advance on Cedar Creek, was not resumed after the battle. One of the advantages of the victory was that Sheridan now felt firm enough in his place to insist upon his own opinion, even against the General-in-Chief, who immediately recurred to his favorite idea of an advance upon the Virginia Central Railroad. This

CHAP. XIV. Sheridan disapproved, giving sound reasons against it, and was allowed to have his way. On the 9th of November he moved his army back to Kernstown for greater convenience of quarters and supply. General Early, imagining that Sheridan was preparing to send troops to Grant, moved down the Valley, hoping to strike a blow at the diminished force; he crossed Cedar Creek on the 11th, but, not being satisfied with the aspect of affairs, hastily retreated on the night of the next day. Sheridan, in his report, attributes this movement to "bluster," and says he was unaware that Early's infantry was in front of him "until it was too late to overtake it in its galloping retreat." In this affair W. H. Powell severely defeated McCausland on the road to Front Royal. When Early got back to the upper Valley, as it was now plain he could do nothing with his force, Kershaw was returned to Lee and Cosby to Breckinridge.

Report
Committee
on Conduct
of the War,
1865-66,
Supple-
ment,
Vol. II.,
p. 46.

The great campaign was over; during the remainder of the year there were still reconnaissances and detached movements of cavalry on both sides; Merritt was sent into Loudon County, so to destroy all forage and subsistence as to make it uninhabitable by the Confederate guerrillas, and he rigorously executed his orders; Rosser crossed the Great North Mountain, and captured a post on the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad; Torbert, on the 19th of December, in obedience to Grant's urgent and reiterated requests, was pushed through Chester Gap to strike the Central road, and Custer rode up the Valley to make a diversion in favor of the other column; but Sheridan's judgment was vindi-

CHAP. XIV.

1864.

cated by the failure of the expedition. The two armies were now rapidly dissolved by the demands of Grant and Lee. Early's Second Corps went to Lee, leaving only Wharton and some cavalry and artillery, with which he moved back to winter quarters at Staunton. Sheridan sent the Sixth Corps to Grant, where they arrived by the middle of December. Crook's corps (Army of West Virginia) followed them; only the Nineteenth was left in the Shenandoah, and one of its divisions also went to Grant during the winter.

Although events had vindicated in every point the wisdom of Sheridan's view as to an advance upon the Virginia Central Railroad, the advantage of breaking it was so important to Grant that he continually recurred to the subject, and at last, on the 27th of February, 1865, Sheridan, now unencumbered by infantry, moved up the Valley with a magnificent force of ten thousand horsemen, under orders from Grant to destroy the Virginia Central Railroad and the James River Canal, to capture Lynchburg, if he found it practicable, and to push south and join Sherman in North Carolina, or return to Winchester, as he might find most opportune. The feeble resistance which Rosser could make against this formidable host was swept aside at a blow. Early was found on the morning of March 2 posted on a hill near Waynesboro' with two brigades of Wharton, some guns, and cavalry. This Early had hoped, and the hope was not extravagant, would be force sufficient at least to check Sheridan's advance until nightfall, when he expected to cross the river and take position in Rockfish Gap; he had done, he says, "more difficult

Report
Committee
on Conduct
of the War,
1865-66.
Supple-
ment,
Vol. II.,
p. 52.

1865.

Early,
"Memoir of
the Last
Year of the
War,"
p. 132.

CHAP. XIV. things than that during the war." A division of veteran infantry well posted, with good artillery, on commanding ground, might reasonably expect to hold at bay a division of cavalry indefinitely. But Custer with three brigades of horse carried the position as easily as if it were a child's snow-fort.

Sheridan,
Report of
Operations
from
Feb. 27
to March 28,
1865.

Without even wasting time in reconnaissance, he sent three regiments round the enemy's left flank, and boldly rode at the front with the rest of his force. "The enemy," says Sheridan, "threw down their arms and surrendered, with cheers at the suddenness with which they were captured." Early himself says, "The troops gave way after making very slight resistance, and soon everything was in a state of confusion." The Confederate general, A. L. Long, who was present, is singularly, explicit as to the nature of the disaster; he says, "As Sheridan was without artillery, and the ground was unfit for the operations of cavalry, Early could have easily maintained his position with reliable troops; but there was considerable disaffection in Wharton's division. Therefore, without his knowledge, his little army harbored the elements of defeat." Its *morale* was gone; it crumbled at the first energetic touch; the final catastrophe was not far off when a division of hardy foot soldiers surrendered "with cheers" to the first troopers who leaped over their breastworks. The five Confederate generals present, Early, Wharton, Long, R. D. Lilley, and Rosser, saved themselves in the woods; and Early, from a lofty lookout, "had the mortification," he says, "of seeing the greater part of his command being carried off as prisoners." He rode with his staff from one station to another, every-

Long,
"Memoirs
of Robert
E. Lee,"
p. 366.

Early,
"Memoir of
the Last
Year of the
War,"
p. 133.

where finding the hated blue uniforms in possession; but finally made his weary way through the ice and sleet to Richmond, his army having absolutely disappeared. He was kindly received by General Lee, and sent back to "reorganize what was left of his command," but was soon after superseded by General John Echols. "The only solution of this affair which I can give," he says in his "Memoir," with that curious absence of the sense of humor which gives such comic force to all his writing, "is that my men did not fight as I had expected them to do."

CHAP. XIV.
1865.
Early,
"Memoir of
the Last
Year of the
War,"
p. 133.

But although his victory at Waynesboro' left the Valley at Sheridan's mercy, he was not then or thereafter to take Lynchburg, any more than his predecessors. He went into Charlottesville, and destroyed the railroad right and left; Merritt's cavalry wrecked the canal; manufactories and mills were everywhere burned. Lynchburg had been reënforced by infantry, and Sheridan determined not to attack it, but to push eastward and join Grant, ruining as he went.

CHAPTER XV

CABINET CHANGES

CHAP. XV.

1864.

THE principal concession in the Baltimore platform made by the friends of the Administration to its opponents was the resolution which called for harmony in the Cabinet; and, although no method was specified by which such harmony could be attained, it was no secret that the Convention requested, and, so far as its authority went, required, that the Cabinet should be rendered homogeneous by the dismissal of those members who were stigmatized as conservatives. The President at first took no notice, either publicly or privately, of this resolution, and it was with something akin to consternation that the radical body of his supporters heard of the first change which occurred after the Convention adjourned. The resignation of Mr. Chase, whom the extreme radicals regarded as in some sort their special representative in the Government, took them entirely by surprise. The demonstration made by Mr. Wade and Mr. Davis some weeks later increased the feeling of restlessness among them, and brought upon the President a powerful pressure from every quarter to induce him to give satisfaction to the radical demand by the dismissal

from the Cabinet of Montgomery Blair, the Postmaster-General, who had gradually attracted to himself the hostility of all the radical Republicans in the country.

The unpopularity into which Mr. Blair had fallen among the Radicals was one of those incidents that recall the oft-repeated simile that compares political revolutions to Saturn devouring his offspring. Mr. Blair was one of the founders of the Republican party. After graduating at West Point and serving for a year in the Seminole war, he resigned his commission in the army and began to practice law in St. Louis. He soon gained high distinction in his profession, and became, while yet a young man, a judge of the Court of Common Pleas. He returned to Maryland, and in 1855 was appointed solicitor of the United States in the Court of Claims. The repeal of the Missouri Compromise made a Republican of him. President Buchanan removed him from office in 1858 on account of his zealous antislavery attitude. He was counsel for the plaintiff in the famous Dred Scott case, and presided over the Republican Convention of Maryland in 1860. With the exception of his brother Frank in Missouri, and Cassius M. Clay in Kentucky, he was the most prominent opponent of the extension of slavery in all the Southern States.

The immediate cause which occasioned his loss of caste among the radical antislavery men was the quarrel which sprung up between his family and General Frémont in Missouri. In this also he had the mortification of feeling that he had nursed the pinion that impelled the steel. The reputation of General Frémont was the creation of the Blairs.

CHAP. XV. It was at their solicitation that the President appointed the Pathfinder a major-general in the regular army, and gave him command of the important department of Missouri. So late as the 24th of August, 1861, General Frémont relied upon Montgomery Blair for all the support and assistance he required in Washington. The Postmaster-General, writing to him on that date, spoke of the President and his colleagues with the indiscreet frankness of confidential friendship. "Chase," he said, "has more horror of seeing treasury notes below par than of seeing soldiers killed, and therefore has held back too much, I think. I don't believe at all in that style of managing the Treasury." He goes on lamenting his lack of influence in the Government in a style which reminds us of Mr. Chase himself.

Aug. 24, 1861.

"This, I can see," he says, "is partly my own fault. I have been too obstreperous, perhaps, in my opposition, and men do not like those who have exposed their mistakes beforehand and taunt them with them afterwards. The main difficulty is, however, with Lincoln himself. He is of the Whig school, and that brings him naturally not only to incline to the feeble policy of Whigs, but to give his confidence to such advisers. It costs me a great deal of labor to get anything done, because of the inclination of mind on the part of the President, or leading members of the Cabinet, including Chase, who never voted a Democratic ticket in his life. But you have the people at your back, and I am doing all I can to cut red tape and get things done. I will be more civil and patient than heretofore, and see if that won't work." No man can

be sufficiently sure of friends to write them such letters as this. A few months later Frémont was Blair's deadliest enemy, and these letters, being printed, came up like impertinent ghosts between the Postmaster-General and his colleagues at the Cabinet table.

In the beginning of this quarrel the Blairs were unquestionably right; but being unjustly assailed by the Radicals, the natural pugnacity of their dispositions would not permit them to rest firmly planted on their own ground. They entered upon a course of hostility that was at first confined to their factious enemies, but which gradually broadened and extended till it landed them both in the Democratic party. Montgomery Blair was doubtless unconscious of his progress in that direction. He thought himself the most zealous of Republicans until the moment that he declared himself the most zealous of Democrats. Every admonition he received but increased the heat and energy with which he defended himself. The Union League of Philadelphia, towards the close of 1863, left out his name in the resolutions by which they elected all the rest of the Cabinet honorary members of the League. He chose to consider Henry Winter Davis responsible for some attacks made upon him, and desired to defeat him in Maryland. The President, who had certainly no cause to show personal favor to Mr. Davis, said that as he was the choice of the Union men of Maryland he merited and should receive what friendly support the Administration could give.

Mr. Blair made a speech in Rockville touching upon the subject of reconstruction, and indulged in

CHAP. XV. vigorous and somewhat acrid allusions to some of his leading Republican assailants. This brought upon him, and upon Mr. Lincoln, over his shoulders, much vehement criticism. It was in relation to this speech that the President said :

“The controversy between the two sets of men represented by Blair and by Sumner is one of mere form and little else. I do not think Mr. Blair would agree that the States in rebellion are to be permitted to come at once into the political family and renew their performances, which have already so bedeviled us, and I do not think Mr. Sumner would insist that when the loyal people of a State obtain supremacy in their councils and are ready to assume the direction of their own affairs they should be excluded. I do not understand Mr. Blair to admit that Jefferson Davis may take his seat in Congress again as a representative of his people. I do not understand Mr. Sumner to assert that John Minor Botts may not. So far as I understand Mr. Sumner, he seems in favor of Congress taking from the Executive the power it at present exercises over insurrectionary districts and assuming it to itself ; but when the vital question arises as to the right and privilege of the people of these States to govern themselves, I apprehend there will be little difference among loyal men. The question at once is presented, In whom is this power vested ? and the practical matter for discussion is how to keep the rebellious population from overwhelming and outvoting the loyal minority.”

J. H.,
Diary,
Nov. 1, 1864.

It was a year before this that the President wrote the letter of kindly and sensible advice to General Frank P. Blair, Jr., which we have given in another



J. P. USHER.

place; a letter which, when published many months afterwards, gave great and lasting offense to the enemies of Blair in Congress and in the country. Although General Blair at this time retired from the contest for the speakership, the Postmaster-General continued, with equally bad taste and judgment, to oppose the nomination of Schuyler Colfax for that place. Upon Colfax going to him in person and demanding the motive of his hostility, Mr. Blair was so indiscreet as to give as a reason for his opposition that Colfax was running as a Chase candidate.

CHAP. XV.

J. H.,
Diary,
Nov. 21,
1863.

The opposition to Blair was not confined to the radical demonstrations in the Baltimore Convention and out of it. Some of the most judicious Republicans in the country, who were not personally unfriendly to Blair, urged upon the President the necessity of freeing himself from such a source of weakness and discord. Even in the bosom of the Government itself a strong hostility to Mr. Blair made itself felt. While Mr. Chase remained in the Cabinet there was always a condition of smoldering hostility between the two men. Mr. Blair's enmity to Mr. Seward also became more and more violent in its expression, and his relations with Mr. Stanton were subject to a strain which was hardly endurable. There was still, however, so much in his character and antecedents that was estimable, the President had so deep a regard for both the Blairs, and especially for their father, that he had great reluctance to take any action against the Postmaster-General.

In the middle of July, after the termination of Early's raid upon Washington, General Halleck,

1864.

CHAP. XV. exasperated by the report of stringent and sarcastic remarks which Mr. Blair, under the provocation of the destruction by rebels of his property in the suburbs of Washington, had made, in reference to the laxity or poltroonery of the defenders of the capital, addressed an angry note to the Secretary of War, saying that he wished to know "whether such wholesale denouncement and accusation by a member of the Cabinet receives the sanction and approbation of the President of the United States. If so," General Halleck continued, "the names of the officers accused should be stricken from the rolls of the army; if not, it is due to the honor of the accused that the slanderer should be dismissed from the Cabinet." Mr. Stanton sent this letter of Halleck's to the President without comment. The President, on the same day, replied in his most masterful manner. After summarizing Halleck's letter, he said:

Halleck to
Stanton,
July 13,
1864. MS.

"Whether the remarks were really made I do not know, nor do I suppose such knowledge is necessary to a correct response. If they were made, I do not approve them; and yet, under the circumstances, I would not dismiss a member of the Cabinet therefor. I do not consider what may have been hastily said in a moment of vexation at so severe a loss is sufficient ground for so grave a step. Besides this, truth is generally the best vindication against slander. I propose continuing to be myself the judge as to when a member of the Cabinet shall be dismissed."

Lincoln
to Stanton,
July 14,
1864. MS.

Not satisfied with this, the President, when the Cabinet came together, read them this impressive and oracular little lecture:

I must myself be the judge how long to retain in and when to remove any of you from his position. It would greatly pain me to discover any of you endeavoring to procure another's removal, or in any way to prejudice him before the public. Such endeavor would be a wrong to me, and, much worse, a wrong to the country. My wish is that on this subject no remark be made nor question asked by any of you, here or elsewhere, now or hereafter.

CHAP. XV.

Lincoln,
Autograph
MS.

This, we are inclined to think, is one of the most remarkable speeches ever made by a President. The tone of authority is unmistakable. Washington was never more dignified; Jackson was never more peremptory.

The feeling against Mr. Blair and the pressure upon the President to remove him increased throughout the summer. Henry Wilson wrote on the 5th of September, "Blair every one hates. Tens of thousands of men will be lost to you or will give a reluctant vote on account of the Blairs." The President's mail was filled with such appeals as this; but through the gloom and discouragement of midsummer he declined to act. There was a moment, as we have seen, when he lost heart in the campaign, and believed that the verdict of the country would be against him. Yet even then he refused to make the concession to the radical spirit which he was assured from every quarter would result so greatly to his advantage; but with the victories which came later in the season, and with the response of the country to the pusillanimous surrender of the Chicago Convention, there came a great and inspiring change of public opinion, and before the month of September ended the assured triumph of the Union cause became evi-

Wilson
to Lincoln,
Sept. 5, 1864.
MS.

CHAP. XV. dent to one so capable as was Mr. Lincoln to discern and appreciate the signs of the times. He felt that it was his duty no longer to retain in his Cabinet a member who, whatever his personal merits, had lost the confidence of the great body of Republicans. He had learned also during the long controversy more than he had ever known before of the violent and unruly candor of the Postmaster-General. Exasperated by the attacks made upon him, there were no limits to Mr. Blair's jealousy and suspicion. He wearied the President by insisting upon it that all the leading Republicans were Lincoln's enemies. After Chase left the Cabinet he insisted that Seward and Stanton were in league against Lincoln; that Stanton went into the Cabinet to break down the Administration by thwarting McClellan, and that Seward was coquetting with the Copperheads. Mr. Lincoln listened to these denunciations with growing fatigue and impatience. He protested against them. He said once to Mr. Blair, in the presence of another, "It is much better not to be led from the region of reason into that of hot blood by imputing to public men motives which they do not avow." Towards the end of September the President, reasonably sure of his reelection, and feeling that he ought not any longer to delay complying with the demand of a party which was giving him so earnest and loyal a support, wrote this letter to the Postmaster-General:

J. H.,
Diary.

1864.

You have generously said to me more than once that whenever your resignation could be a relief to me it was at my disposal. The time has come. You very well know that this proceeds from no dissatisfaction of mine with

you personally or officially. Your uniform kindness has been unsurpassed by that of any friend; and while it is true that the war does not so greatly add to the difficulties of your department as to those of some others, it is yet much to say, as I most truly can, that in the three years and a half during which you have administered the General Post-office, I remember no single complaint against you in connection therewith.

CHAP. XV.

Lincoln to
Blair,
Sept. 23,
1864. MS.

Mr. Blair accepted his dismissal in a manner which was to have been expected from his manly and generous character. He called upon the President at once, not pretending to be pleased at what had happened, but assuming that the President had good reasons for his action, and refraining from any demand for explanation. He went immediately to Maryland and busied himself in speaking and working for the Union cause, and for the reelection of Mr. Lincoln. He made a speech a few days later in New York, at a great war meeting, in which he said that the action of the President in asking his resignation was suggested by his own father. All the family received this serious reverse in the temper of fighting men ready for all the chances of battle, and of bold players whose traditional rule of conduct when the cards go against them is, "Pay and look pleasant." General Blair wrote to his father that he was sure in advance that his brother had acted for the good of the country, and in the interest of the reelection of Mr. Lincoln, in which he says "the safety of the country is involved."

"I believe," he continued, "that the failure to elect Mr. Lincoln would be the greatest disaster that could befall the country, and the sacrifice made by the Judge to avert this is so incomparably small

CHAP. XV. that I felt it would not cost him a pang to make. . . . The Judge leaves the Cabinet with an untarnished name and the reputation of having administered the department with the greatest ability and success; and that as far as worldly considerations go, it is far better for him to go out than to remain in the Cabinet. . . . As to the future I have no fear, if Lincoln's election is secured. No matter what his personal disposition may be towards us, or what his political necessities may compel him to do, if the country is saved and restored, those who have served the country in its trials will some day be rewarded for the patriotism they have shown by the verdict of a higher power than that of the President."

F. P. Blair,
Jr., to
F. P. Blair,
Sept. 30,
1864.
MS.

After the death of Judge Taney, Mr. Blair for a while indulged the hope that he might be appointed Chief-Justice, a position for which his natural abilities, his legal learning, his former judicial service, and his large acquaintance with the more important matters which would come before the court eminently fitted him; but the competition of Mr. Chase was too strong for any rival, however worthy, and he was chosen, to the bitter disappointment of the Blairs. Even this did not shake their steadfast loyalty to the Union cause, nor their personal fidelity and friendship to the President. Immediately after his second inauguration Mr. Lincoln offered Montgomery Blair his choice of the Spanish or the Austrian mission, an offer which was peremptorily though respectfully declined.

Seward
to Lincoln,
Mar. 9, 1865.
MS.

Mr. Blair's successor in the Cabinet, ex-Governor William Dennison of Ohio, had been selected beforehand. The President informed him of his ap-

pointment in a brief telegram, and directed him to proceed to Washington as soon as possible. Mr. Dennison had rendered admirable service to the Government, as Governor of Ohio, at the outbreak of the war. He was a gentleman of the highest character, of great ability and perfect integrity, and of peculiarly winning and gracious manners. We find among the President's papers a letter written by his intimate friend, David Davis, on the 2d of June, suggesting Governor Dennison as a proper person to preside over the Baltimore Convention. Judge Davis wrote: "He is a pure, upright man, one of your most devoted friends. . . If, during this or your subsequent Administration, you think it your duty to modify your Cabinet, in my judgment you could not get a wiser counselor than Governor Dennison." This, so far as we know, was the first, perhaps the only, suggestion made to the President in favor of Mr. Dennison for a place in the Cabinet. The claim of localities always had a disproportionate weight in his mind. When Mr. Chase resigned Mr. Lincoln appointed Governor Tod in his place, and after Tod had declined he was glad to find an opportunity to call another Ohio statesman into his Cabinet.

The reconstruction of the Cabinet went on by gradual disintegration rather than by any brusque or even voluntary action of the President. Mr. Bates, the Attorney-General, before the end of the year 1864 grew weary, not only of the labors of his official position, but also of the rapid progress of the revolution of which he had been one of the earliest advocates. Before the war he was the most eminent of all those Whig lawyers in the

CHAP. XV.

1864.

Davis
to
Lincoln,
MS.

CHAP. XV. South who, while standing by all the guarantees of the Constitution, still opposed the aggressions of the slave power. After the rebellion began he did not shift his ground in any essential respect. When asked by the Secretary of the Treasury whether colored men could be citizens of the United States and therefore competent to discharge functions reserved exclusively for citizens, he not only answered in the affirmative, but accompanied his answer with an elaborate opinion, full of learning and legal acumen, in which he relied exclusively upon the law in the case, without regard to any question of morals or of sentiment involved.

Nov. 29, 1862.
"Opinions
of the At-
torneys-
General."
Vol. X.,
p. 382.

Although heartily devoted to the cause of freedom and emancipation, he was wedded, by constitutional temperament and lifelong habit, to the strictest rules of law and precedent. Every deviation from tradition pained him inexpressibly. The natural and unavoidable triumph of the radical party in St. Louis politics, and to a certain extent in those of the nation, seemed to him the herald of the trump of doom. He grew weary of it all, and expressed to the President his desire for retirement. If he had not himself wished to resign the President would probably not have suggested it. Mr. Lincoln was greatly displeased at an announcement made by Simon Cameron, as if upon his authority, that in the event of reëlection he would call around him fresh and earnest antislavery men. On hearing of this indiscreet and injurious statement, he said, "They need not be so savage about a change in the Government. There are now only three left of the original Cabinet." He put a vacant judgeship at the disposition of the Attorney-Gen-

J. H.,
Diary.

eral; but Mr. Bates declined it, not without some petulant remarks about the "uselessness of a legal system in a State dominated by the revolutionary spirit which then ruled in Missouri." He said he could not work in harmony with the radicals, whom he regarded as enemies of law and order; there was no such thing as a patriotic and honest American radical; some of the transcendental Republican Germans were honest enough in their moon-struck theorizing, but the Americans impudently and dishonestly arrogated to themselves the title of unconditional loyalty, when the whole spirit of their faction was contempt of and opposition to the law. "While the present state of things continues in Missouri there is no need of a court; so says Judge Treat, and I agree with him." Considering the subject of a successor to Mr. Bates, the President, his mind still hampered by the consideration of locality, weighed for several days the names of all the leading men of Missouri who were in any way fitted for the place, but found good reasons for rejecting them all. One of his secretaries said to him, "Why confine yourself to Missouri? Why not go to the adjoining State and take Judge Holt?" The President looked up with some surprise, and said: "Why, that would be an excellent appointment. I question if I could do better. I had always intended, though I had never mentioned it to any one, that if a vacancy should occur on the Supreme bench in any Southern district I would appoint him; but giving him a place in the Cabinet would not hinder that."

Mr. Bates tendered his resignation at last on the 24th of November.

CHAP. XV.

J. H.,
Diary.

Ibid.

CHAP. XV.

"Heretofore," he said, "it has not been compatible with my ideas of duty to the public and fidelity to you to leave my post of service for any private considerations, however urgent. Then the fate of the nation hung in doubt and gloom; even your own fate, as identified with [that of] the nation, was a source of much anxiety. Now, on the contrary, the affairs of the Government display a brighter aspect; and to you, as head and leader of the Government, all the honor and good fortune that we hoped for has come. And it seems to me, under these altered circumstances, that the time has come when I may, without dereliction of duty, ask leave to retire to private life. In tendering the resignation of my office of Attorney-General of the United States (which I now do) I gladly seize the occasion to repeat the expression of my gratitude, not only for your good opinion which led to my appointment, but also for your uniform and unvarying courtesy and kindness during the whole time in which we have been associated in the public service. The memory of that kindness and personal favor I shall bear with me into private life, and hope to retain it in my heart as long as I live. Pray let my resignation take effect on the last day of November."

Bates to
Lincoln,
Nov. 24,
1864. MS.

A few days before the end of November the President offered the place of Attorney-General to Joseph Holt; but Mr. Holt, with that modesty and conscientiousness which formed the most striking trait of his noble character, believed that the length of time which had elapsed since he had retired from active service at the bar had rendered him unfit for the preparation and presentation of cases

in an adequate manner before the Supreme Court, and therefore declined the appointment. The President was not at first inclined to accept this as a sufficient reason for declination; but on the 30th of November Mr. Holt wrote a letter formally reiterating his refusal to accept the appointment.

"After the most careful reflection," he said, "I have not been able to overcome the embarrassments referred to in our last interview, and which then disinclined me to accept, as they must now determine me respectfully to decline, the appointment tendered in terms at once so generous and so full of encouragement. In view of all the circumstances, I am satisfied that I can serve you better in the position which I now hold at your hands than in the more elevated one to which I have been invited. I have reached this conclusion with extreme reluctance and regret; but having reached it, and with decided convictions, no other course is open to me than that which has been taken. I beg you to be assured that I am and shall ever be most grateful for this distinguished token of your confidence and good-will. In it I cannot fail to find renewed incentives to the faithful and zealous performance of the public duties with which you have already charged me."

Failing to secure Mr. Holt, the mind of the President turned to another Kentuckian, James Speed, an able and accomplished lawyer, a man of high professional and social standing in his State, and the brother of the most intimate friend of the President's youth, Joshua F. Speed. Mr. Holt warmly recommended Mr. Speed. He said:

CHAP. XV.

1864.

Holt to
Lincoln,
Nov. 30,
1864. MS.

CHAP. XV.

Holt to
Lincoln,
Dec. 1, 1864.
MS.

"I can recall no public man in the State, of uncompromising loyalty, who unites in the same degree the qualifications of professional attainments, fervent devotion to the Union and to the principles of your Administration, and spotless purity of personal character. To these he adds—what I should deem indispensable—a warm and hearty friendship for yourself, personally and officially."

Fessenden
to Lincoln,
Feb. 6, 1865.
MS.

Soon after the opening of the new year Mr. Fessenden was again elected to the Senate from Maine, and resigned his office as Secretary of the Treasury. In his letter of resignation he said: "I carry with me great and increased respect for your personal character and for the ability which has marked your administration of the Government at a period requiring the most devoted patriotism and the highest intellectual and moral qualities for a place so exalted as yours. Allow me also to congratulate you upon the greatly improved aspect of our national affairs, to which, and to the auspicious result of our prolonged struggle for national life, now, as I sincerely believe, so near at hand, no one can claim to have so largely contributed as the chosen Chief Magistrate of this great people."

The place thus vacated instantly excited a wide and spirited competition of recommendations. The principal bankers of Chicago joined in recommending Hugh McCulloch of Indiana, who had made a favorable official record as Comptroller of the Currency in the supervision of the national banks; Governor Morgan was strongly presented by nearly the entire State of New York, though a few of the so-called Radicals of that State joined

CHAP. XV.

with the great mass of the people of New England in recommending Governor Andrew, whose splendid executive qualities no less than his fiery zeal and patriotism had endeared him to the earnest anti-slavery people throughout the country. Both branches of the Maine Legislature recommended Vice-President Hamlin to take the place vacated by his distinguished colleague. Jay Cooke, who was carrying on with such remarkable success at that time the great funding operations of the Treasury Department, reënforced with his recommendation the demand of the Western politicians and bankers for Mr. McCulloch. Montgomery Blair, who still retained his friendly and confidential relations with the President, wrote to him on the 22d of February, saying that Mr. Hamlin did not wish his claim to be appointed Secretary of the Treasury urged upon the President; that Mr. Morgan positively refused the appointment. He supplemented these two important bits of information with the characteristic and irrelevant suggestion that Mr. Seward should leave the Cabinet, that Sumner should take his place, and that Governor Andrew might then succeed Sumner in the Senate. He also added that it would be a good thing to encourage Garibaldi to drive the French from Mexico. The President concluded to nominate Governor Morgan, who declined the honor. Mr. McCulloch was then appointed; upon which Mr. Usher, on the 8th of March, desiring, as he said, to relieve the President from any possible embarrassment which might arise from the fact that two members of the Cabinet were from the same State, resigned his place as Secretary of the Interior. The President

Blair to
Lincoln,
Feb. 22,
1865. MS.

Mar. 8, 1865.
MS.

CHAP. XV. indorsed the resignation, "Accepted, to take effect May 15, 1865." Before that date should arrive tremendous changes were to take place in the Government of the United States.

CHAPTER XVI

LINCOLN REELECTED

FROM the moment the Democratic Convention CHAP. XVI.
named its candidates the stars in their courses Aug. 31, 1864.
seemed to fight against them. During the very
hours when the streets of Chicago were blazing
with torches, and the air was filled with the per-
fervid rhetoric of the peace men, rejoicing over
their work, Hood was preparing for the evacua-
tion of Atlanta; and the same newspapers which
laid before their readers the craven utterances of
the Vallandigham platform announced the entry
of Sherman into the great manufacturing me-
tropolis of Georgia—so close together came bane
and antidote. The Convention had declared the
war was a failure, and demanded that the Govern-
ment should sue for terms of peace. Lincoln's
reply three days afterwards was a proclamation an-
nouncing "the signal success that Divine Prov-
idence has recently vouchsafed" the country at Sept. 3, 1864.
Mobile and Atlanta, and calling for "devout ac-
knowledgment to the Supreme Being in whose
hands are the destinies of nations." He also ten-
dered, by proclamation, the national thanks to
Farragut, Canby, and Granger, and to General
Sherman and the gallant officers and soldiers of their

CHAP. XVI. respective commands, and ordered that national salutes of one hundred guns should be fired on successive days from all the arsenals and navy yards in the United States in honor of these glorious victories. Thus, amid the prayers and thanksgivings of a grateful people, and the thunder and smoke of great guns, uttering from their iron throats the general joy, the Presidential campaign began. The darkest hour had come just before the dawn, and the light broadened on the political campaign from beginning to end.¹

It would of course be unjust to describe the mass of the Democratic party as lacking in patriotism and as advocates of a dishonorable peace. But parties are judged by their general tendencies and not by the virtues or vices of individuals; and the two parties in the North in 1864 were differentiated with sufficient definiteness in the public mind as the peace and the war parties. In the South there was no shade of doubt as to this distinction. The hopes and prayers of the revolt were centered on McClellan's success. They deplored Confederate military disasters more for their political effect in the North than for any other reason. The "Charleston

1864:

¹ The Rev. Dr. J. P. Thompson, calling on the President soon after this, congratulated him on the improved aspect of politics, and asked him whether he attributed it in greater part to the Chicago platform or to the victory at Atlanta. "I guess it was the victory," Mr. Lincoln answered; "at least, I should prefer to have that repeated."—"Voices of the Pulpit," p. 191.

the Confederacy and the peace men in the United States. These constitute two immense forces that are working together for the procurement of peace. . . Our success in battle insures the success of McClellan. Our failure will inevitably lead to his defeat." The article goes on to lament the disaster at Atlanta, which would cloud the promising prospect of the peace organization; by which the entire Democratic party was meant. CHAP. XVI.

One of the earliest speeches of the autumn was made by Mr. Seward at his home in Auburn, New York. He spoke avowedly without authority from the President; yet, as well from his intimacy with Mr. Lincoln as from his commanding place in the Administration, his speech demanded and received great attention. He said: "While the rebels continue to wage war against the Government of the United States, the military measures affecting slavery, which have been adopted from necessity to bring the war to a speedy and successful end, will be continued, except so far as practical experience shall show that they can be modified advantageously, with a view to the same end. When the insurgents shall have disbanded their armies and laid down their arms the war will instantly cease; and all the war measures then existing, including those which affect slavery, will cease also; and all the moral, economical, and political questions, as well questions affecting slavery as others which shall then be existing between individuals and States and the Federal Government, whether they arose before the civil war began, or whether they grew out of it, will, by force of the Constitution, pass over to the ar- Sept. 3, 1864.

Baker,
"The
Diplomatic
History
of the War
for the
Union,"
pp. 503, 504.

CHAP. XVI. bitrament of courts of law and to the councils of legislation."

Baker,
"The
Diplomatic
History
of the War
for the
Union,"
p. 499.

Referring to the Chicago declaration in favor of the immediate cessation of hostilities, and the paralyzing effect on the action of the Government which would follow the success of the Democrats upon such a platform, he asked, in that contingency, "Who can vouch for the safety of the country against the rebels during the interval which must elapse before the new Administration can constitutionally come into power?"¹ The opposition journalists immediately seized upon this as a threat that the Administration was determined to keep itself in power whatever might be the verdict of the people, and this clamor went on until the President, as we shall show, put an effectual quietus upon it.

1864.

Mr. Lincoln himself took little part in the contest. He was forced, from time to time, to assist with his presence charitable demonstrations in favor of the sick and wounded soldiers; and being always obliged on these occasions to say a few words, he acquitted himself of these necessary tasks with dignity and discretion. He made no personal reference to his opponents, and spoke of

¹ Ten days later, when Mr. Seward had returned to Washington, he said, in answer to a serenade: "The Democracy of Chicago, after waiting six weeks to see whether this war for the Union is to succeed or fail, finally concluded that it would fail, and therefore went in for a nomination and platform to make it a sure thing by a cessation of hostilities and an abandonment of the contest. At Baltimore, on

the contrary, we determined that there should be no such thing as failure, and therefore we went in to save the Union by battle to the last. Sherman and Farragut have knocked the bottom out of the Chicago nominations, and the elections in Vermont and Maine prove the Baltimore nominations stanch and sound. The issue is thus squarely made up—McClellan and disunion, or Lincoln and Union."

his enemies North and South with unfailing charity and moderation. Regiments of soldiers returning to their homes after their term of service was over sometimes called upon him, and in brief and pithy speeches he thanked them for calling, and always added a word or two of wise or witty political thought. Speaking to an Ohio regiment, he defined in one phrase the essential character of our republican government with more accuracy and clearness than ever Jefferson had done: "I wish it might be more generally and universally understood what the country is now engaged in. We have, as all will agree, a free government, where every man has a right to be equal with every other man. In this great struggle this form of government, and every form of human right, is endangered if our enemies succeed. . . There is involved in this struggle the question whether your children and my children shall enjoy the privileges we have enjoyed. . . When you return to your homes, rise up to the height of a generation of men worthy of a free government, and we will carry out the great work we have commenced."

To another regiment he said: "I happen, temporarily, to occupy this big white house. I am a living witness that any one of your children may look to come here as my father's child has. It is in order that each one of you may have, through this free government which we have enjoyed, an open field and a fair chance for your industry, enterprise, and intelligence — that you may all have equal privileges in the race of life with all its desirable human aspirations — it is for this that the struggle should be maintained, that we

CHAP. XVI. may not lose our birthright. . . The nation is worth fighting for to secure such an inestimable jewel."

1864.

Being invited to attend a Union mass meeting at Buffalo, the President at first thought of writing a letter, and we find among his papers the following fragment in his own manuscript:

Yours inviting me to attend a Union mass meeting at Buffalo is received. Much is being said about peace, and no man desires peace more ardently than I. Still I am yet unprepared to give up the Union for a peace which, so achieved, could not be of much duration. The preservation of our Union was *not* the sole avowed object for which the war was commenced. It was commenced for precisely the reverse object — *to destroy our Union*. The insurgents commenced it by firing upon the *Star of the West* and on Fort Sumter, and by other similar acts. It is true, however, that the Administration accepted the war thus commenced for the sole avowed object of preserving our Union; and it is not true that it has since been, or will be, prosecuted by this Administration for any other object. In declaring this I only declare what I can know, and do know, to be true, and what no other man can know to be false.

In taking the various steps which have led to my present position in relation to the war, the public interest and my private interest have been perfectly parallel, because in no other way could I serve myself so well as by truly serving the Union. The whole field has been open to me where to choose. No place-hunting necessity has been upon me urging me to seek a position of antagonism to some other man, irrespective of whether such position might be favorable or unfavorable to the Union.

Of course, I may err in judgment; but my present position in reference to the rebellion is the result of my best judgment, and, according to that best judgment, it is the only position upon which any executive can or could save the Union. Any substantial departure from it insures the success of the rebellion. An armistice — a cessation of hostilities — is the end of the struggle, and the insur-

gents would be in peaceable possession of all that has been struggled for. Any different policy in regard to the colored man deprives us of his help, and this is more than we can bear. We cannot spare the hundred and forty or fifty thousand now serving us as soldiers, seamen, and laborers. This is not a question of sentiment or taste, but one of physical force, which may be measured and estimated as horse-power and steam-power are measured and estimated. Keep it, and you can save the Union. Throw it away, and the Union goes with it. Nor is it possible for any administration to retain the service of these people with the express or implied understanding that upon the first convenient occasion they are to be reënslaved. It can not be, and it ought not to be.

CHAP. XVI.

Lincoln to
Schermern-
horn,
Sept. 12,
1864. MS.

After he had written thus far he seems to have changed his mind as to the good taste or the expediency of aiding even thus far in his own canvass. He therefore laid his letter aside unsigned and wrote a brief note declining to address the meeting, on the ground, first, that it would be a breach of precedent, and, secondly, that if he once began to write letters it would be difficult to discriminate between meetings having equal claims.

Ibid.

Although the dignity and self-control with which Mr. Lincoln held himself aloof from the work of the canvass has been generally acknowledged, there is one incident of the campaign which was the object of severe criticism at the time. Governor Johnson, in accordance with the request of the State Convention of Tennessee, had issued a proclamation specifying the manner in which the vote for Presidential electors should be taken, the qualification of voters, and the oath which they should be required to take. The Democratic candidates on the electoral ticket of that State, regarding themselves aggrieved by these requirements of

Sept. 30,
1864.

CHAP. XVI. the Convention and the Governor, united in a protest against this proceeding, and one of their number, John Lellyett, was sent to present the protest in person. In the account of his interview with the President, which he published in the newspapers, Mr. Lellyett said that the President told him he would manage his side of the contest in his own way, and the friends of General McClellan could manage their side in theirs. It is not impossible that, in a moment of irritation at the presentation of a petition which was in itself an insinuation that he was making a selfish and corrupt use of his power, the President may have treated Mr. Lellyett with scant courtesy; but he took the protest, nevertheless, and told him he would answer it at his convenience. There is certainly nothing of malice or of petulance in the grave and serious tone of the reply which the President sent a few days later to the McClellan electors of Tennessee. He informed them that he had had no communication whatever with Governor Johnson on the subject of his proclamation; that he had given to the subject such consideration as was in his power in the midst of so many pressing public duties. He said:

My conclusion is that I can have nothing to do with the matter, either to sustain the plan as the Convention and Governor Johnson have initiated it, or to revoke or modify it as you demand. By the Constitution and laws the President is charged with no duty in the conduct of a Presidential election in any State; nor do I, in this case, perceive any military reason for his interference in the matter.

The movement set on foot by the Convention and Governor Johnson does not, as seems to be assumed by you,

emanate from the National Executive. In no proper sense can it be considered other than as an independent movement of at least a portion of the loyal people of Tennessee. CHAP. XVI.

I do not perceive in the plan any menace of violence or coercion toward any one. Governor Johnson, like any other loyal citizen of Tennessee, has the right to favor any political plan he chooses, and, as military governor, it is his duty to keep the peace among and for the loyal people of the State. I cannot discern that by this plan he purposes any more.

But you object to the plan. Leaving it alone will be your perfect security against it. Do as you please on your own account, peacefully and loyally, and Governor Johnson will not molest you, but will protect you against violence so far as in his power.

I presume that the conducting of a Presidential election in Tennessee in strict accordance with the old code of the State is not now a possibility.

It is scarcely necessary to add that if any election shall be held, and any votes shall be cast in the State of Tennessee for President and Vice-President of the United States, it will belong not to the military agents, nor yet to the Executive Department, but exclusively to another department of the Government, to determine whether they are entitled to be counted in conformity with the Constitution and laws of the United States. Except it be to give protection against violence, I decline to interfere in any way with any Presidential election.

Lincoln to
William B.
Campbell
et al.,
Oct. 22,
1864.

The McClellan electors thereupon withdrew from the contest; Lincoln and Johnson electors were chosen, but their votes were not counted by Congress.

The most important utterance of the President during the campaign was a speech which he made on the evening of the 19th of October, in which he referred to the construction which had been placed on the remarks of the Secretary of State at Auburn,

CHAP. XVI. already quoted. He thought the distorted and unjust conclusions which had been drawn from
1864. Seward's remarks had gone far enough, and that the time had come to put an end to them, and he seized, for that purpose, the occasion of a serenade from a party of loyal Marylanders who were celebrating in Washington the victory which the party of emancipation had gained in the elections in their State. He said a few words of congratulation upon that auspicious event, and then added:

A word upon another subject. Something said by the Secretary of State, in his recent speech at Auburn, has been construed by some into a threat that if I shall be beaten at the election I will, between then and the end of my constitutional term, do what I may be able to ruin the Government. Others regard the fact that the Chicago Convention adjourned, not *sine die*, but to meet again, if called to do so by a particular individual, as the intimation of a purpose that if their nominee shall be elected he will at once seize control of the Government. I hope the good people will permit themselves to suffer no uneasiness on either point.

I am struggling to maintain government, not to overthrow it. I am struggling especially to prevent others from overthrowing it. I therefore say that if I shall live I shall remain President until the 4th of next March; and that whoever shall be constitutionally elected therefor, in November, shall be duly installed as President on the 4th of March; and that, in the interval, I shall do my utmost that whoever is to hold the helm for the next voyage shall start with the best possible chance to save the ship.

This is due to the people both on principle and under the Constitution. Their will, constitutionally expressed, is the ultimate law for all. If they should deliberately resolve to have immediate peace, even at the loss of their country and their liberty, I know not the power or the right to resist them. It is their own business, and they must do as they please with their own. I believe, how-

ever, they are still resolved to preserve their country and their liberty; and in this, in office or out of it, I am resolved to stand by them.

CHAP. XVI.

Autograph
MS.

1864

During the progress of the campaign Mr. Lincoln was frequently called upon to assist his friends, to oppose his enemies, and to exercise his powerful influence in appeasing discord in different States and districts. He interfered as little as possible, and always in the interests of the party at large, rather than in those of individuals. He took no account of the personal attitude of candidates towards himself. In the case of those who were among his intimate friends he would go no further than to demand that Government officers should not work against them. When Isaac N. Arnold of Chicago, who had incurred the hostility of Mr. Scripps, the postmaster at that place, complained of the opposition of that official and called upon the President to put a stop to it, the President would do nothing more than to order the offending postmaster to content himself with the exercise of his own rights as a citizen and a voter and to allow his subordinates to do the same. The postmaster answered, as was natural, that this was precisely what he had been doing, and that this was the source of Mr. Arnold's complaint; that the congressman wanted his active official assistance, and would be satisfied with nothing less. Although Arnold was an intimate and valued friend of the President, he declined to exercise any further pressure upon the postmaster, and Mr. Arnold soon afterwards withdrew from the contest.

After candidates had been regularly and fairly nominated, the President had no hesitation in

CHAP. XVI. doing all in his power to conciliate hostilities and to unite the party in support of them. He tolerated in these cases no factious or malicious opposition on the part of his office-holders, and he laid his hands most heavily upon those injudicious friends of his own who attempted to defeat the reëlection of Republican congressmen who had not been especially friendly to him. A large number of the leading Republicans in Roscoe Conkling's district had declared their intention to oppose him. Mr. Conkling's friends appealed to the President, claiming that the Republican opposition to him had its rise and origin among friends of the Secretary of State. The President commended their complaint to the attention of Mr. Seward, and answered for himself: "I am for the regular nominee in all cases, and no one could be more satisfactory to me as the nominee in that district than Mr. [Roscoe] Conkling. I do not mean to say there [are] not others as good as he in the district, but I think I know him to be at least good enough." Being informed of some hostility on the part of the custom-house officials in New York against Frederick A. Conkling, he wrote similar admonitions to them. The postmaster of Philadelphia being accused of interference against William D. Kelley, the President sent for him, and, following his custom in grave matters, he read to him a reprimand which he had committed to paper in the following words:

Lincoln
to Ward
Hunt,
Aug. 16,
1864. MS.

Complaint is made to me that you are using your official power to defeat Judge Kelley's renomination to Congress. I am well satisfied with Judge Kelley as a Member of Congress, and I do not know that the man

who might supplant him would be as satisfactory; but the correct principle, I think, is that all our friends should have absolute freedom of choice among our friends. My wish, therefore, is that you will do just as you think fit with your own suffrage in the case, and not constrain any of your subordinates to do other than as he thinks fit with his. This is precisely the rule I inculcated and adhered to on my part when a certain other nomination now recently made was being canvassed for.

CHAP. XVI.

June 20,
1864. MS.

The reform of the civil service had not at that time been formulated by its friends, nor even adopted in principle by the country at large, yet it would be difficult even in the light of this day to improve upon this statement of its essential principle as applied to the conduct of office-holders. The postmaster, of course, promised exact obedience; but later in the summer the President was informed, on authority that he credited, that of the two or three hundred employees in the post-office not one was openly in favor of the renomination of Judge Kelley. Upon learning this, Mr. Lincoln wrote to an influential friend in Philadelphia, stating these facts and adding:

"This, if true, is not accidental. Left to their free choice, there can be no doubt that a large number of them, probably as much or more than half, would be for Kelley. And if they are for him and are not restrained they can put it beyond question by publicly saying so. Please tell the postmaster he must find a way to relieve me from the suspicion that he is not keeping his promise to me in good faith." The postmaster felt at last the hand of iron under the velvet glove, and Kelley was renominated and reelected, as he was ever

Lincoln to
McMichael,
Aug. 5, 1864.
MS.

CHAP. XVI. after till his death — to the honor and advantage of his district and State.

1864. The summer was full of brief panics and flurries among the politicians, and they were continually rushing to Mr. Lincoln to urge him to action or inaction in the interests of the canvass. We believe there is no instance in which he yielded to these solicitations. A matter of especial difficulty was the draft for half a million of men which had been issued on the 18th of July. Leading Republicans all over the country, fearing the effect of the draft upon the elections, begged the President to withdraw the call or suspend operations under it. Mr. Cameron, so late as the 19th of October, after the State elections had been secured, advised against the draft in Philadelphia. Mr. Chase, on the same day, telegraphed from Ohio, which had been carried triumphantly by the Republicans a few days before, recommending the suspension of the draft for three weeks. MS. Judge Johnson of Ohio reports that he was with the President when a committee came from Ohio to request him to suspend the draft until after the elections, and that Mr. Lincoln quietly answered, "What is the Presidency worth to me if I have no country?" But these solicitations were not all in the same direction. General Sherman telegraphed from the field, "If the President modifies it [the draft] to the extent of one man, or wavers in its execution, he is gone forever; the army would vote against him."

Sept. 17,
1864.

The politicians and the general probably exaggerated in equal measure; the army would not have rejected him if he had seen fit to suspend the draft; and the people stood by him in his refusal

to do it. He went so far in compliance with the earnest request of the Union people in Indiana as to write to Sherman expressing his sense of the importance of allowing as many of the Indiana soldiers as possible to go home to vote. Most of the other States which voted in October allowed their soldiers to vote in the field. Indiana had not passed the necessary legislation for this purpose. The draft was steadily proceeding in that State, and, in the opinion of the leading men there, was endangering the success of the Union party in the elections. "Anything you can safely do," Mr. Lincoln wrote, "to let her soldiers, or any part of them, go home and vote at the State election will be greatly in point. They need not remain for the Presidential election, but may return to you at once."

He was careful, however, not to urge General Sherman to any course of action which he might consider injurious. "This is," he added, "in no sense an order, but is merely intended to impress you with the importance, to the army itself, of your doing all you safely can, yourself being the judge of what you can safely do." There were also reports from Missouri that Rosecrans was inclined to deny the soldiers the right of attending the elections, on the assumed ground that they would get drunk and make disturbance. The President, on being informed of this, quoted to Rosecrans the following words from the letter which he had written to Schofield; "At elections see that those, and only those, are allowed to vote who are entitled to do so by the laws of Missouri, including as of those laws the restrictions laid by the

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Lincoln to
Sherman,
Sept. 19,
1864. MS.

CHAP. XVI. Missouri Convention upon those who may have participated in the rebellion.' This," said Lincoln, "I thought right then and think right now, and I may add I do not remember that either party complained after the election of General Schofield's action under it. Wherever the law allows soldiers to vote, their officers must also allow it."

Lincoln to
Rosecrans,
Sept. 26,
1864. MS.

The opposition to Mr. Lincoln within the ranks of his own party did not entirely die away, even after the Chicago nomination and the changed political prospect which immediately followed it. So late as the 20th of September Thurlow Weed wrote to Mr. Seward that "the conspiracy against Mr. Lincoln collapsed on Monday last. It was equally formidable and vicious, embracing a larger number of leading men than I supposed possible. Knowing that I was not satisfied with the President, they came to me for coöperation; but my objection to Mr. Lincoln is that he has done too much for those who now seek to drive him out of the field. Their last meeting was early last week at the house of Dudley Field. It was attended by Greeley, Godwin, Wilkes, Tilton, Opdyke, Curtis Noyes, and twenty-five others of the same stripe."

He also stated that a circular had been sent to leading Republicans in other States inquiring as to the feasibility of making another nomination for President at that time; that the malcontents, finding themselves in solitude, had concluded to break up operations and try to control the regular State Convention.

Thurlow
Weed
to Seward,
Sept. 20,
1864. MS.

This letter referred to a movement which at one time assumed a certain importance. About the middle of August a number of leading Republicans,

belonging to the faction in New York opposed to Mr. Seward, who had been displeased at the unanimous nomination of Lincoln at Baltimore, and who by constant conversation among themselves had become convinced of his unpopularity, endeavored to organize a demonstration against him which should force him to withdraw from the ticket. They had the earnest support and eager instigation of Henry Winter Davis in Maryland, of the editors of the "Cincinnati Gazette" in Ohio, and what would have surprised Mr. Lincoln if he had known it, of Charles Sumner in Massachusetts. General Butler was the favorite candidate of most of this singular cabal, and he sent a representative to their conferences. Mr. Chase gave in a guarded adhesion and Daniel S. Dickinson — not having been nominated for the Vice-Presidency at Baltimore — was naturally "full of anxiety and alarm over the manifest downward tendency of things." They met with severe rebuffs from several quarters where they expected assistance; Roscoe Conkling refused bluntly to sign their call; Jacob Collamer thought it inexpedient. When the country woke up to the true significance of the Chicago platform, the successes of Sherman excited the enthusiasm of the people, and the Unionists, arousing from their mid-summer languor, began to show their confidence and regard towards the Republican candidate, the hopelessness of all efforts to undermine him became apparent, and, one by one, all the men engaged in this secret movement against him fell into line and did their best to elect him.

After every semblance of open hostility had disappeared everywhere else in the country the fire of

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For letters
from all
these
persons see
"New
York Sun,"
June 30,
1864.

1864.

CHAP. XVI. faction still kept it alive in Missouri. A singular state of things existed there. The Radical party had almost entirely absorbed the Union sentiment of the State; the Conservative party, the President's friends, had almost ceased to exist. The incumbents of the Government offices, a few of the intimate personal friends of Blair, still stood out against the Radicals; and so long as this attitude was maintained the Radicals, while working vigorously for their State and local tickets, refused to avow themselves in favor of Lincoln. So far as can be ascertained the only reason for this absurd position was that the "Claybanks," as the Conservatives were called, wished the Radicals to declare for Lincoln as a pretext by which they could join the vast majority of their party, and the Radicals spitefully refused to allow them this accommodation. Thomas C. Fletcher, the Radical candidate for governor, refused during the greater part of the campaign to make any public statement that he would vote for Lincoln. His reason for this, privately given, was that he feared such an announcement would alienate from his support a large number of the more furious anti-Lincoln Germans. At last, however, he concluded to declare for the regular Republican Presidential ticket, and a meeting was appointed for the purpose; but, to the astonishment of the moderate Union men, he went no further at this meeting than to say he would not vote for McClellan, and in explanation of this singular performance he told the President's private secretary that he had found at the hotel where his speech was made a letter of the "Claybank" committee offering their support on condition of his

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declaring for Lincoln, and that he would not be coerced into it.

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Nicolay to
Lincoln,
Oct. 18,
1864. MS.

The President sent messages to the moderate Unionists expressing his desire that the childish quarrel should come to an end, and they, to do them justice, desired nothing more. The only condition of their support which they made was that candidates should declare themselves for Lincoln, which they in turn would have been willing to do if it were not that the "Claybanks" requested it. So far as practical results went the party was united enough, Mr. Nicolay reported; "it seems to be very well understood that, with the exception of very few impracticables, the Union men will cast their votes for you, for the Radical Congressmen, for the emancipation candidates, for the State Legislature and the State Convention, so that in practice nearly everybody is right and united, while in profession everybody is wrong or at cross purposes." This was surmised while the clatter of factious fighting was going on, and was abundantly proved by the result. While the Radical candidate for governor only claimed that he would be elected by a majority of ten thousand, which claim by many of his party was considered sanguine, when the votes were counted it was found that Lincoln had carried the State by the immense majority of forty thousand.

Ibid.

The electoral contest began with the picket firing in Vermont and Maine in September, was continued in what might be called the grand guard fighting in October, in the great States of Pennsylvania, Ohio, and Indiana, and the final battle all along the line took place in November. Vermont and Maine were

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CHAP. XVI. carried by good Republican majorities, the canvass in the latter State having been managed by James G. Blaine with a dash and energy which gave a presage of his subsequent career. Before the October elections came on, auguries of Republican success had become so significant and universal that there was little doubt of the result in the best-informed political circles. The President, however, was too old a politician to be sure of anything until the votes were counted, and it was not without some natural trepidation that on the evening of the 11th of October he walked over to the War Department¹ to get from the telegraphic instruments the earliest intimations of the course of the contest. The first dispatch he received contained the welcome intelligence of the election of Rutherford B. Hayes and his Republican colleague from the hard-fought Cincinnati districts. Next came dispatches announcing a Republican majority in Philadelphia and indicating a similar result in the State of Pennsylvania.

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The news continued very much in the same strain during the evening, and the President, in the lull of dispatches, read aloud to Stanton and Dana selected chapters of the Nasby papers.² As the votes of the soldiers in the different camps in the vicinity of Washington began to be reported they were found to be nearly unanimous in favor of the Republican candidate, the proportion among West-

¹ Attended by one of his secretaries, from whose manuscript diary this account is taken.

² In the volume of "Reminiscences of Abraham Lincoln," edited by A. T. Rice, and in an article printed in the "New York

Sun," Charles A. Dana has given an entertaining account of Stanton's impatience at this performance of Lincoln, which he attributed to a stolid indifference to the result in which the President had so momentous a stake.

ern troops being generally that of ten to one: CHAP. XVI.
among the Eastern troops, although there was
everywhere a majority, it was not so large. Carver
Hospital, by which Lincoln and Stanton passed
every day on their way to the country, gave the
heaviest opposition vote reported — about one out
of three. Lincoln turned to the Secretary and said,
“That’s hard on us, Stanton! They know us bet-
ter than the others.” The sum of the day’s work
was of enormous importance. Indiana indicated a
gain of thirty thousand in two years. Governor
Morton and the entire Republican ticket were
elected by twenty thousand majority, with the gain
of four Congressmen. Pennsylvania, whose Repre-
sentatives in Congress had been equally divided,
now changed their proportion to fifteen against
nine, and made her Legislature strongly Republican
in both branches, with popular majorities ranging
from ten to fifteen thousand. The Unionists car-
ried Ohio by a majority of over 54,000, and effected
a complete revolution in her representation in
Congress; for while in 1862 she had elected fourteen
Democrats and five Republicans, she now sent to
Washington seventeen Republicans and two Demo-
crats. But the success of the day which lay nearest
to the heart of the President was the adoption in
Maryland of the new State constitution abolishing
slavery forever on her soil. The majority was a
very slender one, the vote of the soldiers in the
field being necessary to save emancipation; but it
served, and the next month the Union majority
was greatly increased.

It would seem strange that after this decisive
victory there should have been any room left for

CHAP. XVI. hope or confidence on the side of the opposition or for anxiety and panic among Republican politicians; but alternating fits of confidence and despondency are inseparable from all long-continued political campaigns, and even after these overwhelming successes we find the Democratic speeches and papers full of boasting, and the private correspondence of experienced Republican leaders full of tremor and apprehension. The President, however, had passed through his moment of despondency, and from this time to the end entertained no shadow of doubt of the result. Mr. Washburne wrote to him on the 17th of October from Galena: "It is no use to deceive ourselves about this State. . . Everything is at sixes and sevens; and no head or tail to anything. There is imminent danger of our losing the State"; and more in the same strain. The President laid away the letter, writing on the envelope the single word, "Stampeded." Ten days later Washburne had recovered his spirits, and wrote, "Logan is carrying all before him in Egypt." Earlier in the campaign Mr. Washburne, desiring to do all in his power to forward the Union cause, had written to Grant asking permission to print a letter from him in favor of Lincoln. Grant replied that he had no objection to this, but he thought that "for the President to answer all the charges the opposition would bring against him would be like setting a maiden to work to prove her chastity." A friend of Mr. Seward communicated to him about the same time an astonishing mare's nest, in which he claimed to have discovered that the opposition policy for the Presidential campaign

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would be to abstain from voting. The Secretary submitted this letter to the President. To Mr. Lincoln, with his lifelong observation of politics, this idea of abstention from voting seemed more amusing than threatening. He returned the letter to the Secretary with this indorsement: "More likely to abstain from stopping when once they get at it."

As the time drew near for the election in November a flight of rumors of intended secessionist demonstrations in the principal States of the North covered the land. The points of danger which were most clearly indicated were the cities of Chicago and New York. We have related in another place the efficient measures taken to prevent any outbreak in Chicago, with the arrest and punishment of the conspirators. The precautionary measures in other States prevented any attempt at disorder. To preserve the public peace in the city of New York and to secure the guarantee of a fair and orderly election there, General Butler was sent with a considerable force of troops to that city. He issued an order on the 5th of November declaring that troops had been detailed for duty in that district sufficient to preserve the peace of the United States, to protect public property, to prevent disorder, and to insure calm and quiet. He referred to the charge made by the opposition that the presence of Union troops might possibly have an effect upon the free exercise of the duty of voting at the ensuing election. He hotly repudiated this accusation.

"The armies of the United States," he said, "are ministers of good and not of evil. . . Those who fear them are accused by their own consciences. Let

CHAP. XVI. every citizen having the right to vote act according to the inspiration of his own judgment freely. He will be protected in that right by the whole power of the Government if it shall become necessary."

1864. He denounced energetically the crime of fraudulent voting, but did not assume to himself the duty of separating the tares from the wheat. He simply warned the evil-intentioned that fraudulent voting would be detected and punished after the election was over. Governor Seymour had been, as usual, much exercised for fear of executive usurpation at the polls, and had issued a proclamation on the 2d of November urging the avoidance of all measures which would tend to strife or disorder. He called upon sheriffs of counties to take care that every voter should have a free ballot in the manner secured to him by the constitution and laws, and to exercise the full force of the law and call forth, if need be, the power of their districts against the interference of the military in the vicinity of the polling-places.

There was by no means a unanimous agreement among even the supporters of the Administration as to the expediency of sending General Butler to New York at this time. The action was taken by Mr. Stanton on his own responsibility. Thurlow Weed disapproved of it, and up to the day of election thought, on the whole, the proceeding was injurious, in spite of Butler's admirable general order; but Butler acted under the circumstances with remarkable judgment and discretion. He devoted the days which elapsed between his arrival and the election to making himself thoroughly

acquainted with the city, with its police arrangements, and the means at his disposal to preserve order. Every hour was occupied with a careful study of maps, of police arrangements, of telegraphic communication between his headquarters and every part of the city, and in consultations with general officers, the creation of an improvised engineer department, and the planning of a system of barricades in case of widespread insurrection. But the object to which he gave special attention, and in which he most thoroughly succeeded, was the avoidance of every pretext for any charge of interference with the rights of citizens at the polls. On the morning of the 8th of November, although the city was absolutely in the hands of the disciplined military force which had been sent to guard it, not a soldier was visible to the thousands of voters who thronged the streets; but everybody knew that they were there, and the result was, as Butler telegraphed to Lincoln at noon on election day, "the quietest city ever seen."

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To Mr. Lincoln this was one of the most solemn days of his life. Assured of his personal success, and devoutly confident that the day of peace and the reestablishment of the Union was not far off, he felt no elation and no sense of triumph over his opponents. His mind seemed filled with mingled feelings of deep and humble gratitude to the vast majority of his fellow-citizens who were this day testifying to him their heartfelt confidence and affection, and of a keen and somewhat surprised regret that he should be an object in so many quarters of so bitter and vindictive an opposition. He said to one of his secretaries: "It is singular

CHAP. XVI. that I, who am not a vindictive man, should always, except once, have been before the people for election in canvasses marked for their bitterness. When I came to Congress it was a quiet time; but always, except that, the contests in which I have been prominent have been marked with great rancor.”

J. H.,
Diary.

MS.

In the evening he went over,¹ as was his custom, to the War Department. The night was rainy and dark. As he entered the telegraph room he was handed a dispatch from John W. Forney claiming 10,000 Union majority in Philadelphia. The figures were so far above his estimate that he said, “Forney is a little excitable.” A moment after a dispatch came from Mr. Fulton in Baltimore, “15,000 in the city, 5000 in the State. All hail, free Maryland!” A moment after there came messages from Boston announcing majorities for Samuel Hooper and A. H. Rice of something like 4000 each. The President, astonished, asked if this was not a clerical error for 400, but the larger figures were soon confirmed. Mr. Rice afterwards, in speaking of these astounding majorities in districts where there was never the least charge made of irregularity at the polls, quoted an explanation made by a constituent of his, with no irreverent intention, “The Almighty must have stuffed the ballot-boxes.”

The entrance of General Thomas T. Eckert, who came in covered with mud from a fall in crossing the street, reminded the President of an incident of his defeat by Douglas. He said: “For such an awkward fellow, I am pretty sure-footed. It used

¹ Attended by one of his secretaries, from whose manuscript diary this account is taken.

to take a rather dexterous man to throw me. I remember the evening of the day in 1858 that decided the contest for the Senate between Mr. Douglas and myself was something like this — dark, raining, and gloomy. From reading the returns I had ascertained that we had lost the Legislature, and started to go home. The path had been worn hog-backed and was slippery. Both my feet slipped from under me, but I recovered myself and lit clear; and I said to myself, ‘It is a slip, and not a fall.’”

Mr. Fox, the Assistant Secretary of the Navy, indulged in some not unnatural exultation over the complete effacement of Henry Winter Davis from Maryland politics. Mr. Davis had assailed the navy with a peculiarly malicious opposition for two years for no cause that Mr. Fox could assign except that he was a brother-in-law of Montgomery Blair. The President would not agree with him. “You have more of that feeling of personal resentment than I,” he said. “Perhaps I have too little of it; but I never thought it paid. A man has no time to spend half his life in quarrels. If any man ceases to attack me I never remember the past against him.” All the evening the dispatches kept the same tenor of widespread success — in almost all cases above the estimates. The October States showed increased majorities, and long before midnight the indications were that the State of New York had cast her ponderous vote for Lincoln, and made the verdict of the North almost unanimous in his favor, leaving General McClellan but twenty-one electoral votes, derived from New Jersey, Delaware, and Kentucky, 212 being cast for Lincoln and Johnson.

CHAP. XVI. It was two o'clock in the morning before the President left the War Department. At the door he met a party of serenaders with a brass band who saluted him with music and cheers, and, in the American fashion, demanded a speech. He made a brief response, saying that he did not pretend that those who had thought the best interests of the nation were to be subserved by the support of the present Administration embraced all the patriotism and loyalty of the country. He continued:

"I do believe, and I trust without personal interest, that the welfare of the country does require that such support and indorsement should be given.

"I earnestly believe that the consequences of this day's work, if it be as you assume, and as now seems probable, will be to the lasting advantage, if not to the very salvation, of the country. I cannot at this hour say what has been the result of the election. But, whatever it may be, I have no desire to modify this opinion, that all who have labored to-day in behalf of the Union have wrought for the best interests of the country and the world, not only for the present, but for all future ages.

"I am thankful to God for this approval of the people; but, while deeply grateful for this mark of their confidence in me, if I know my heart, my gratitude is free from any taint of personal triumph. I do not impugn the motives of any one opposed to me. It is no pleasure to me to triumph over any one, but I give thanks to the Almighty for this evidence of the people's resolution to stand by free government and the rights of humanity."

"Annual
Cyclo-
pædia,"
1864, p. 789.

For several days the torrent of congratulations came pouring in. General Blair wrote from

Georgia, where he was leading an army corps under Sherman to the sea: "The vote in this army to-day is almost unanimous for Lincoln. Give Uncle Abe my compliments and congratulations." Grant paused for a moment in his labors in the investment of Richmond to express his sense of the vast importance and significance of the election. He thought a tremendous crisis in the history of the country had been met and triumphantly passed by the quiet and orderly conduct of the American people on the 8th of November.

The manner in which the President received these tumultuous demonstrations of good-will was so characteristic that it seems to us worthy of special attention. He was absolutely free from elation or self-congratulation. He seemed to deprecate his own triumph and to sympathize rather with the beaten than the victorious party. He received notice that on the night of the 10th of November the various Republican clubs in the District of Columbia would serenade him. Not wishing to speak extempore on an occasion where his words would receive so wide a publication, he sat down and hastily wrote a speech which, while it has not received the world-wide fame of certain other of his utterances, is one of the weightiest and wisest of all his discourses. He read it at the window which opens on the north portico of the Executive Mansion, a secretary standing beside him lighting the page with a candle. "Not very graceful," he said, "but I am growing old enough not to care much for the manner of doing things." There was certainly never an equal compliment paid to a serenading crowd. The inmost philosophy of republi-

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Nov. 8, 1864.
MS.J. H.,
Diary.

CHAP. XVI. can governments was in the President's little speech. He said:

It has long been a grave question whether any Government not too strong for the liberties of its people can be strong enough to maintain its own existence in great emergencies. On this point the present rebellion brought our republic to a severe test, and a Presidential election occurring in regular course during the rebellion added not a little to the strain. If the loyal people united were put to the utmost of their strength by the rebellion, must they not fail when divided and partially paralyzed by a political war among themselves? But the election was a necessity. We can not have free Government without elections; and if the rebellion could force us to forego or postpone a national election, it might fairly claim to have already conquered and ruined us. The strife of the election is but human nature practically applied to the facts of the case. What has occurred in this case must ever recur in similar cases. Human nature will not change. In any future great national trial, compared with the men of this, we shall have as weak and as strong, as silly and as wise, as bad and as good. Let us, therefore, study the incidents of this, as philosophy to learn wisdom from, and none of them as wrongs to be revenged. But the election, along with its incidental and undesirable strife, has done good, too. It has demonstrated that a people's Government can sustain a national election in the midst of a great civil war. Until now, it has not been known to the world that this was a possibility. It shows, also, how sound and how strong we still are. It shows that, even among candidates of the same party, he who is most devoted to the Union and most opposed to treason can receive most of the people's votes. It shows, also, to the extent yet known, that we have more men now than we had when the war began. Gold is good in its place; but living, brave, patriotic men are better than gold.

But the rebellion continues; and, now that the election is over, may not all having a common interest reunite in a common effort to save our common country? For my

own part, I have striven and shall strive to avoid placing any obstacle in the way. So long as I have been here, I have not willingly planted a thorn in any man's bosom. While I am deeply sensible to the high compliment of a reelection, and duly grateful, as I trust, to Almighty God for having directed my countrymen to a right conclusion, as I think, for their own good, it adds nothing to my satisfaction that any other man may be disappointed or pained by the result. CHAP. XVI.

May I ask those who have not differed with me to join with me in this same spirit towards those who have? And now let me close by asking three hearty cheers for our brave soldiers and seamen, and their gallant and skillful commanders. Autograph
MS.

In this lofty and magnanimous spirit he received all the addresses of congratulation that came in upon him in these days. To a delegation from Maryland who ascribed it to his rare discretion that Maryland was then a free State he replied with deep appreciation of their courtesy, and added, that those who differed from and opposed us would yet see that defeat was better for their own good than if they had been successful. He not only had no feeling of malicious triumph himself, he had no patience with it in others. When Mr. Raymond, who represented his special friends in New York, wrote a letter breathing fire and vengeance against the officials of the custom-house, who, he said, had come near defeating him in the race for Congress, the President merely observed that it was "the spirit of such letters as that which created the factious malignity of which Mr. Raymond complained." To all those who begged for a rigorous and exemplary course of punishment for political derelictions in the late canvass his favorite expression was, "I am in favor of short statutes of

CHAP. XVI. limitation in politics." He rejected peremptorily some suggestions of General Butler and the War Department having in view the punishment of flagrant offenders in New York: "We must not sully victory with harshness." His thoughtful and chivalrous consideration for the beaten party did not, however, prevent him from feeling the deepest gratitude for those who had labored on his side. He felt that the humblest citizen who had done his duty had claims upon him. Hearing that Deacon John Phillips of Sturbridge, Massachusetts, a man who had already completed his 104th year, and had voted at every Presidential election since the foundation of the Government, had taken the pains to go to the polls to vote for him, the President wrote him a grateful letter of thanks. "The example," he said, "of such devotion to civic duties in one whose days have already been extended an average lifetime beyond the Psalmist's limit cannot but be valuable and fruitful. It is not for myself only, but for the country which you have in your sphere served so long and so well, that I thank you."

Lincoln to
Phillips,
Nov. 21,
1864.

The venerable man, who had attained his majority in the midst of the war of the Revolution, and who had arrived at middle age before this century opened, answered in a note which greatly pleased and moved the President, as coming from one of the oldest men living on the earth. He said:

I feel that I have no desire to live but to see the conclusion of this wicked rebellion and the power of God displayed in the conversion of the nations. I believe, by the help of God, you will finish the first, and also be the means of establishing universal freedom and restoring

peace to the Union. That the God of mercy will bless you in this great work, and through life, is the prayer of your unworthy servant,

JOHN PHILLIPS.

CHAP. XVI.

MS.

There is one phrase of the President's speech of the 10th of November which we have quoted which is singularly illustrative, not only of the quick apprehension with which he seized upon facts of importance, but also of the accuracy and method with which he ascertained and established them. Within a few hours after the voting had closed he was able to say that the election had shown that "we have more men now than we had when the war began." A great bundle of papers which lies before us as we write, filled with telegrams from every quarter annotated in his own neat handwriting, with a mass of figures which would have dismayed an ordinary accountant, shows the importance which he attached to this fact and the industry with which he investigated it. In his message to Congress a few weeks later he elaborated this statement with the utmost care. He showed from the comparative votes in 1860 and in 1864 a net increase of votes during the three years and a half of war of 145,551. The accomplished statisticians of the "Tribune" almanac in the following month, after the closest study of the official returns, expressed their surprise "at the singular accuracy of the President's figures."

1864.

An extract from his annual message to Congress gives the best summing up of the results of the election that has ever been written.

The purpose of the people within the loyal States to maintain the integrity of the Union was never more firm nor more nearly unanimous than now. The extraordinary

CHAP. XVI. calmness and good order with which the millions of voters met and mingled at the polls give strong assurance of this. Not only all those who supported the Union ticket so called, but a great majority of the opposing party also, may be fairly claimed to entertain and to be actuated by the same purpose. It is an unanswerable argument to this effect, that no candidate for any office whatever, high or low, has ventured to seek votes on the avowal that he was for giving up the Union. There have been much impugning of motives, and much heated controversy as to the proper means and best mode of advancing the Union cause; but on the distinct issue of Union or no Union the politicians have shown their instinctive knowledge that there is no diversity among the people. In affording the people the fair opportunity of showing one to another and to the world this firmness and unanimity of purpose, the election has been of vast value to the national cause.

Appendix,
"Globe,"
Dec. 6, 1864,
p. 3.

On the day of election General McClellan resigned his commission in the army, and the place thus made vacant was filled by the appointment of General Philip H. Sheridan, a fit type and illustration of the turn in the tide of affairs, which was to sweep from that time rapidly onward to the great and decisive national triumph.



GENERAL PHILIP H. SHERIDAN.

CHAPTER XVII

CHASE AS CHIEF-JUSTICE

CHIEF-JUSTICE TANEY died on the 12th day of October, 1864, during the public rejoicings that hailed the success of the Union party at the autumnal elections. He was a man of amiable character, of blameless life, of great learning, of stainless integrity; yet such is the indiscriminating cruelty with which public opinion executes its decrees, that this aged and upright judge was borne to his grave with few expressions of regret, and even with a feeling not wholly suppressed that his removal formed a part of the good news which the autumn had brought to the upholders of the Union. Toilsome and irreproachable as his life had been, so far as purity of intentions were concerned, it was marked by one of those mistakes which are never forgiven. In a critical hour of history he had made a decision contrary to the spirit of the age, contrary to the best hopes and aspirations of the nation at large. Before he had assumed the grave responsibilities of chief-justice he had not been insensible to those emotions and sympathies which animated the majority of his countrymen in later years. So early as 1818 he had spoken of slavery as a blot on our national character, and ex-

CH. XVII.

1864.

CH. XVII. pressed the confident hope that it would effectually though gradually be wiped away. "Until it shall be accomplished, until the time shall come when we can point without a blush to the language held in the Declaration of Independence," he said, "every friend of humanity will seek to lighten the galling chain of slavery and better to the utmost of his power the wretched condition of the slave."

But when he assumed public office he became a part of the machinery of his party. He accepted its tenets and carried them unflinchingly to their logical result, so that to a mind so upright and straightforward in its operations there seemed nothing revolting in the enunciation of the dismal and inhuman propositions of the Dred Scott decision. His whole life was therefore read in the light of that one act, and when he died, the nation he had so faithfully served according to his lights looked upon his death as the removal of a barrier to human progress. The general feeling found expression in the grim and profane witticism of Senator Wade, uttered some months before, when it seemed likely that the Chief-Justice would survive the Administration of Mr. Lincoln: "No man ever prayed as I did that Taney might outlive James Buchanan's term, and now I am afraid I have overdone it."

The friends of Mr. Chase immediately claimed that the place thus vacated belonged to him. They not only insisted that he was best fitted of all the public men in the country for the duties of that high office; that the great issues of the war would be safest in his hands; that the rights of the freed-men would be most secure with an ardent and con-

sistent abolitionist; that the National currency would be best cared for by its parent; they also claimed that the place had been promised him by the President, and this claim, though not wholly true, was not without foundation. Several times during the past year or two the President had intimated in conversation with various friends of Mr. Chase that he thought favorably of appointing him chief-justice if a vacancy should occur. These expressions had been faithfully reported to the Secretary, and promptly entered by him in his diary at the time. When Andrew G. Curtin was a candidate for reelection as governor of Pennsylvania, John Covode came to Mr. Chase and told him if Curtin was elected he would shape matters in Pennsylvania so as to secure its delegates in the Presidential convention, but that the majority of the loyal men in Pennsylvania preferred Mr. Chase. Mr. Chase replied that no speculations as to Governor Curtin's future course could excuse the loyal men from supporting him now; that the future must take care of itself; that he, Mr. Chase, was not anxious for the Presidency; that there was but one position in the Government which he would really like to have, if it were possible to have it without any sacrifice of principle or public interest, and that was the chief-justiceship. At this Mr. Covode expressed himself satisfied, and went away resolved to permit the renomination of Curtin, which, it may be said in passing, he could have done nothing to prevent.

CH. XVII.

Aug. 30,
1863.

Mr. Chase's eyes seemed pretty constantly fixed upon the bench in the intervals of his Presidential aspirations. For a few days after his resignation

CH. XVII. his feelings against the President were of such bitterness that he appears to have given up that prospect. He was on the verge of open revolt from the party with which he had been so long associated. In his diary of the 6th of July he writes: 1864.

“Pomeroy says he means to go on a buffalo hunt and then to Europe. He cannot support Lincoln, but won't desert his principles. I'm much of the same sentiments, though not willing now to decide what duty may demand next fall. Pomeroy remarked that, on the news of my resignation reaching the Senate, several of the Democratic Senators came to him and said, ‘We'll go with you now for Chase.’ This meant nothing but a vehement desire to overthrow the existing Administration, but might mean much if the Democrats would only cut loose from slavery, and go for freedom and the protection of labor by a National currency. If they would do that I would cheerfully go for any man they might nominate.” A few days later he wrote recounting his efforts for the public good, and added: “My efforts were stoutly resisted outside, and had not earnest sympathy inside of the Administration. They were steadily prevailing, however, when a sense of duty to myself and the country also compelled me to resign.”

Warden,
“Life of
Salmon P.
Chase,”
p. 627.

Ibid.,
pp. 627, 628.

A few malignant opponents of Mr. Lincoln still continued to write to Mr. Chase and keep alive in his mind the fancy of a possible nomination to the Presidency. His weakness before the people had been signally shown by an ill-judged attempt to secure him the nomination for Congress in Cincinnati, but in spite of this he still responded readily to suggestions from factious partisans. To one

writing from Michigan he replied that he was now CH. XVII.
a private citizen and expected to remain such.

"No one," he said, "has been authorized to use my name, in any political connection, except that I said I should not feel at liberty to refuse my services to the citizens of my congressional district if spontaneously and unanimously demanded. I think now that I erred in saying this; but it seemed right at the time. No such movement as the one you suggest seems to me expedient so far as I am concerned. Whether it would be expedient or patriotic in reference to some other name, I am not able to judge. I see only, as all see, that there is a deplorable lack of harmony, caused chiefly, in my judgment, by the injudicious course of some of Mr. Lincoln's chief advisers, and his own action on their advice."

Chase to
May,
Aug. 31,
1864.
Warden,
"Life of
Salmon P.
Chase,"
p. 629.

Even to comparative strangers he could not write without speaking slightly of the President. He kept up this habit to the end of Lincoln's life. To one he said: "I fear our good President is so anxious for the restoration of the Union that he will not care sufficiently about the basis of representation." To another, with a singular and unusual lack of dignity, he said: "Some seem to think that a man who has handled millions must be rich, and so I should be if I could have retained for myself even one per cent. of what I saved to the people; but I would not exchange the consciousness of having kept my hands free from the touch of one cent of public treasure for all the riches in the world." Mr. Chase was, of course, absolutely and unquestionably honest, but that virtue is not so rare in public men that one should celebrate it in himself.

Chase
to Gilmore,
Feb. 23,
1865.
Ibid.,
p. 635.

Ibid.,
p. 635.

CH. XVII.

1864.

He passed the heat of the midsummer in the White Mountains. During his absence his tone of bitter and sullen comment towards the President and his associates in the Cabinet continued,¹ but after the fall of Atlanta, and the evident response of the country to the Chicago nominations, his tone underwent a sudden change. He announced himself at last in favor of the election of Mr. Lincoln. In his diary of the 17th of September, after he had returned to Washington, he said: "I have seen the President twice. . . His manner was cordial and so were his words; and I hear of nothing but good-will from him. But he is not at all demonstrative, either in speech or manner. I feel that I do not know him, and I found no action on what he says or does. . . It is my conviction that the cause I love and the general interests of the country will be best promoted by his reelection, and I have resolved to join my efforts to those of almost the whole body of my friends in securing it." He continues in his usual tone of self-portraiture: "I have been told that the President said he and I could not get along together in the Cabinet. Doubtless there was a difference of temperament, and on some points of judgment I may have been too earnest and eager, while I thought him not earnest enough and too slow. On some occasions, indeed, I found that it was so. But I

¹ Samuel Bowles wrote September 4, 1864: "Do you notice that the 'Antislavery Standard' and the 'Liberator,' the representatives of the old abolitionists, are both earnest for Lincoln? Yet a new crop of Radicals have sprung up, who are

resisting the President and making mischief. Chase is going around, peddling his griefs in private ears and sowing dissatisfaction about Lincoln. Oh, how little great men can be!"—"Life and Times of Samuel Bowles." Vol. I., p. 413.

never desired anything else than his complete success, and never indulged a personal feeling incompatible with absolute fidelity to his Administration." He repeats over and over again in his letters and diaries that he never really desired the Presidency; that he seized the first opportunity of withdrawing from the canvass. From Washington he went to Ohio, where he brought himself at last to make an open declaration of his preference for Mr. Lincoln as against McClellan; he voted for the Republican ticket at the election in October, and sent a telegram to the President that the result was "all right in Ohio and Indiana."

CH. XVII.
Schuckers,
"Life of S.
P. Chase,"
p. 511.

1864.

The death of Chief-Justice Taney occurred immediately afterwards, and the canvass for a successor on the part of the friends of Mr. Chase began without a moment's delay. Mr. Sumner was particularly ardent and pressing. "A chief-justice is needed," he wrote to the President, "whose position on the slavery question is already fixed and will not need argument of counsel to convert him." A mass of solicitations of the same character came in upon the President and they were reënforced inside the Cabinet by the earnest influence of Mr. Fessenden and Mr. Stanton; and although these and other friends of Mr. Chase were so strongly encouraged by Mr. Lincoln's response that they had no hesitation in assuring him that he would without doubt be made chief-justice, the President gave no decided intimation of his purpose. It is altogether probable that he intended from the first to appoint him, but he resolved at the same time to say nothing about it until he was ready to act. He said to his secretary, "I shall be very 'shut pan' about

CH. XVII. this matter." When one day his secretary brought him a letter from Mr. Chase in Ohio, he said, "What is it about?" "Simply a kind and friendly letter," he secretary answered. Mr. Lincoln, without reading it, replied with his shrewd smile, "File it with his other recommendations."

So reticent was Mr. Lincoln in regard to his purpose that the enemies of Mr. Chase, who were especially abundant and active in Ohio, endeavored to prevent his nomination by the presentation of strong and numerous signed protests against it. The President received them not too affably, and while he listened respectfully to all they had to say in regard to the merits of the case, he sternly checked them when they began to repeat instances of Mr. Chase's personal hostility to himself. He treated with the same contempt a more serious statement which he received from New York that Mr. Cisco, who had personally declared for McClellan, gave as his reason for such a course that Secretary Chase had told him that Mr. Lincoln was incompetent and unfit for the position he held, though he added that Mr. Chase, on his return to Washington, had informed him that he then considered it his public duty to support Mr. Lincoln for the Presidency.

Strangely enough, from the Treasury Department itself came an earnest protest against the late Secretary. The venerable Joseph J. Lewis, Commissioner of Internal Revenue, protested that he was not a man of large legal or financial knowledge; that his selfishness had gradually narrowed and contracted his views of things in general; that he was amazingly ignorant of men; that it was the opinion in the department that he really desired

towards the end of his term of office to injure and, as far as possible, to destroy the influence and popularity of the Administration. By his constant denunciation of the extravagance of disbursements, and his tone of malevolent comment against every act of the President, he clearly indicated his desire to excite popular discontent and grumbling against the Government. Judge Lewis said that with the exception of a few sycophants the entire department was relieved by the change. Even M. B. Field, for whose sake he gave up his place, expressed himself as gratified by it. CH. XVII.

To all these representations Mr. Lincoln made no reply. He was equally silent as to the merits of other distinguished jurists whose names were mentioned to him. He had the highest esteem and regard for William M. Evarts; he had great confidence in the legal learning and weight of character of Justice Swayne; he had a feeling of hearty friendship for Montgomery Blair, and although he had thought proper in the preceding autumn to ask for the latter's resignation, the intimate and even affectionate relations which he maintained towards the ex-Postmaster-General encouraged him and his friends to believe that he would receive the appointment. The late Vice-President Wilson, shortly before his death, said that Blair met him one day near the War Department and solicited his good word, saying that Chase would certainly not be nominated. Wilson was startled by Blair's confident tone, and went at once to the President, to whom he reiterated the arguments already used in favor of Mr. Chase's nomination, saying that the President could well afford to overlook the harsh and indecorous things

Nov. 22,
1875.

CH. XVII. which Chase had said of him during the summer. "Oh! as to that," replied Lincoln, "I care nothing. Of Mr. Chase's ability and of his soundness on the general issues of the war there is, of course, no question. I have only one doubt about his appointment. He is a man of unbounded ambition, and has been working all his life to become President. That he can never be; and I fear that if I make him chief-justice he will simply become more restless and uneasy and neglect the place in his strife and intrigue to make himself President. If I were sure that he would go on the bench and give up his aspirations and do nothing but make himself a great judge, I would not hesitate a moment."

April, 1874.
Wilson,
Conversa-
tion with
J. G. N.,
"Personal
Memoran-
da."

So strong was this impression upon Mr. Lincoln's mind that he half formed the intention of sending for Mr. Chase and saying frankly to him that the way was open to him to become the greatest chief-justice the Supreme Court had ever had if he would dismiss at once and forever the subject of the Presidency from his mind. But speaking on the subject with Senator Sumner, he saw in a moment's conversation how liable to misapprehension such action would be. In his eagerness to do what he thought best for the interests of both Mr. Chase and the country, he lost sight for an instant of the construction which Mr. Chase would inevitably place upon such a proposition coming from his twice successful rival. Convinced as he was of Chase's great powers, and hoping rather against his own convictions that once upon the bench he would see in what direction his best prospects of usefulness and fame rested, he concluded to take all risks, and on the 6th of De-

CH. XVII.

1864.

ember nominated him to the Senate for chief-justice. He communicated his intention to no one, and wrote out the nomination in full with his own hand. It was confirmed at once without reference to a committee. Mr. Chase, on reaching home the night of the same day, was saluted at his door under his new title by his daughter, Mrs. Sprague. He at once sent the President a note, saying: "Before I sleep I must thank you for this mark of your confidence, and especially for the manner in which the nomination was made. I will never forget either, and trust you will never regret either. Be assured that I prize your confidence and good-will more than any nomination to office."

The appointment was received with the greatest satisfaction throughout the Union. Although the name of Mr. Chase had been especially pressed upon the President by the public men who represented the most advanced antislavery sentiment of the North, the appointment when once made met with little opposition from any quarter. Mr. Chase, in a long life of political prominence and constant controversy, had won the universal respect of the country, not only for his abilities, but also for his courage, his integrity, and a certain solid weight of character of which his great head and massive person seemed a fitting embodiment. He had placed his portrait on the lower denominations of the legal tender notes, saying with his customary heavy pleasantry, "I had put the President's head on the higher priced notes, and my own, as was becoming, on the smaller ones." His handsome face and features had thus become more familiar in the eyes of the people than those of any other man in America;

CH. XVII. and though neither then nor at any other period of his life did he become what could be called universally popular, the image of him became fixed in the general instinct as a person of serious importance in the national life. The people who gave themselves the trouble to reason about the matter said it was impossible that an original abolitionist should be untrue to the principles of freedom, or that the father of the National currency should ever disown his own offspring; while those who thought and spoke on impulse took it for granted that such a man as Mr. Chase should never for any length of time be out of the highest employment.

After all, the fears of the President in regard to the Chief-Justice were better founded than his hopes. Mr. Chase took his place on the bench with a conscientious desire to do his whole duty in his great office, to devote his undoubted powers and his prodigious industry to making himself a worthy successor of the great jurists who before him had illustrated the bench, but he could not discharge the political affairs of the country from his mind. He still considered himself called upon to counteract the mischievous tendencies of the President towards conciliation and hasty reconstruction. His slighting references to him in his letters and diaries continued from the hour he took his place on the bench.

When the fighting had ended around Richmond, and on the capitulation of Lee the fabric of the Southern Confederacy had fallen about the ears of its framers like a house of cards, the Chief-Justice felt himself called on to come at once to the front, and he wrote from Baltimore to the President: "I

am very anxious about the future, and most about the principles which are to govern reconstruction, for as these principles are sound or unsound so will be the work and its results. You have no time to read a long letter, nor have I time to write one, so I will be brief. And first as to Virginia." He advised the President to stand by the Peirpoint government. As to the other rebel States, he suggested the enrollment of the loyal citizens without regard to complexion. "This you know," he said, "has long been my opinion. . . The application of this principle to Louisiana is made somewhat difficult by the organization which has already taken place, but happily the constitution authorizes the Legislature to extend the right of suffrage. . . What reaches me of the condition of things in Louisiana impresses me strongly with the belief that this extension will be of the greatest benefit to the whole population."

He advised, as to Arkansas, an amendment of the constitution, or a new convention, the members to be elected by the loyal citizens, without distinction of color. "To all the other States," he continued, "the general principle may be easily applied." He closed by saying: "I most respectfully, but most earnestly, commend these matters to your attention. God gives you a great place and a great opportunity. May he guide you in the use of them." But the same day the President delivered from a window of the White House that final speech to the people which he had prepared without waiting for the instructions of the Chief-Justice, and the day after, Mr. Chase wrote again from Baltimore reviewing the record of both, reminding the Presi-

CH. XVII.

Chase to
Lincoln,
April 11,
1865.
Schuckers,
"Life of
S. P.
Chase,"
p. 515.

CH. XVII. dent of his former errors from which Mr. Chase had tried to save him, discussing in full the Louisiana case, of which the President had made so masterly and luminous a presentation in his speech, insinuating that if the President were only as well informed as he was he would see things very differently.¹ Almost before the ink was dry on this unasked and superfluous sermon the President was dead. The Chief-Justice, writing to a friend in Ohio, said: "The schemes of politicians will now adjust themselves to the new conditions. I want no part in them."

Chase
to Ashley,
April 16,
1865.

He retained his attitude at the head of the extreme Republicans until about the time of the impeachment of Andrew Johnson. Over this famous trial he presided with the greatest dignity and impartiality; with a knowledge of law which was never at fault, and with a courage which rose superior to all the threats and all the entreaties of his friends. But his action during the trial and its result alienated him at once from the great body of those who had been his strongest supporters, while it created a momentary appearance of popularity among his lifelong opponents. His friends began to persuade him, and he began to think, that he might be the candidate of the Democratic party for the Presidency. He commenced writing voluminous letters to leading Democrats expressing his indifference to the nomination, but at the same

¹ "I most earnestly wish you could have read the New Orleans papers for the past few months. Your duties have not allowed it. I have read them a good deal; quite enough to be certain that if you had read what I have your feelings of humanity and justice would not let you rest till all loyalists are made equal in the right of self-protection by suffrage."—Chase to Lincoln, April 12, 1865; Schuckers, "Life of S. P. Chase," p. 517.

time saying he had always been a Democrat, was a Democrat still, and that the course which the Democracy ought to adopt would be to embrace true Democratic principles and declare for universal suffrage in the reconstruction of the Union. He did not flinch for an instant from his position on this important question. He said: "I believe I could refuse the throne of the world if it were offered me at the price of abandoning the cause of equal rights and exact justice to all men." Following his inveterate habit of taking a subjective view of the world of politics, he thought it possible that the Democratic party might be converted in the twinkling of an eye by virtue of his broad and liberal views.

He cherished this pleasant delusion for several months. Whenever an obscure politician called upon him or wrote to him from some remote corner of the country, expressing a desire that he should be the Democratic candidate for the Presidency, he would say, "Such indications . . . afford ground for hope that a change is going on in the views and policy of the Democratic party which warrants good hopes of the future." There was for a moment a vague impression among the leading Democrats that as it was hopeless to make a campaign with one of their own party against the overwhelming popularity of General Grant, it might be worth while to try the experiment of nominating the Chief-Justice with the hope of diverting a portion of the Republican vote, and a correspondence took place between August Belmont and Mr. Chase in relation to that subject. Mr. Chase wrote: "For more than a quarter of a century I have been, in

CH. XVII.

Chase
to Barney,
May 29,
1868.
Schuckers,
"Life of
S. P.
Chase,"
p. 588.

Ibid., p. 584.

CH. XVII. my political views and sentiments, a Democrat, and I still think that upon questions of finance, commerce, and administration generally the old Democratic principles afford the best guidance." But he stoutly asserted, even in the face of this temptation, his belief in universal suffrage, though he coupled it with universal amnesty, and said: "If the white citizens hitherto prominent in affairs will simply recognize their [the negroes'] right of suffrage, and assure them against future attempts to take it from them, I am sure that those citizens will be welcomed back to their old lead with joy and acclamation. . . A majority, if not all, the Southern States, may be carried for the Democratic candidates at the next election."

Chase
to Belmont,
May 30,
1868.
Schuckers,
"Life of S.
P. Chase,"
p. 584.

He repeated this sanguine statement in his correspondence with other leading Democrats, but the negotiation came to nothing; the Democratic Convention met in New York, and Mr. Chase's name, mentioned by accident, gained a roar of cheers from the assembly, and one-half of one vote from a California delegate. He professed his entire indifference to the result, and took no further interest in the canvass. An injudicious Republican politician in New York asked him to address a Grant meeting. He declined, of course, stating that he could not unreservedly support the Republican ticket, and that this was not the time for discrimination in a public address. "The action of the two parties has obliged me to resume with my old faith my old position, . . that of Democrat, by the grace of God, free and independent." When his old enemy, General Blair, came to the front, in the progress of the canvass, and rather



GENERAL GEORGE CROOK.

overshadowed the more conservative Seymour, the Chief-Justice intimated that men of his way of thinking would be constrained to the support of General Grant.

But if the political attitude of Mr. Chase in his later years was a subject of amazement and sorrow to his ardent supporters, his decisions upon the bench were a no less startling surprise to those who had insisted upon his appointment as the surest means of conserving all the victories of the war. He who had sustained Mr. Stanton in his most energetic and daring acts during the war now declared such acts illegal; he who had continually criticized, not always loyally, the conduct of the President for what he considered his weak reverence for the rights of States, now became the earnest champion of State rights; and finally the man to whose personal solicitations a majority of Congress had yielded in passing the legal-tender act, without which he said that the war could not have been successfully carried on, from his place on the bench declared the act unconstitutional. But so firm was the impression in the minds of the people of the United States of the great powers and perfect integrity, the high courage, the exalted patriotism of this man, that when he died, worn out by his tireless devotion to the public welfare, he was mourned and praised as, in spite of all errors and infirmities, he deserved to be. Although his appointment had not accomplished all the good which Mr. Lincoln hoped for when he made it, it cannot be called a mistake. Mr. Chase had deserved well of the republic. He was entitled to any reward the republic could grant him; and the President, in

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In a letter
to Colonel
Wm. Brown
of Ken-
tucky,
Sept. 29,
1868.
Schuckers,
"Life of S.
P. Chase,"
p. 592.

May 7, 1873.

CH. XVII. giving to his most powerful and most distinguished rival the greatest place which a President ever has it in his power to bestow, gave an exemplary proof of the magnanimity and generosity of his own spirit.

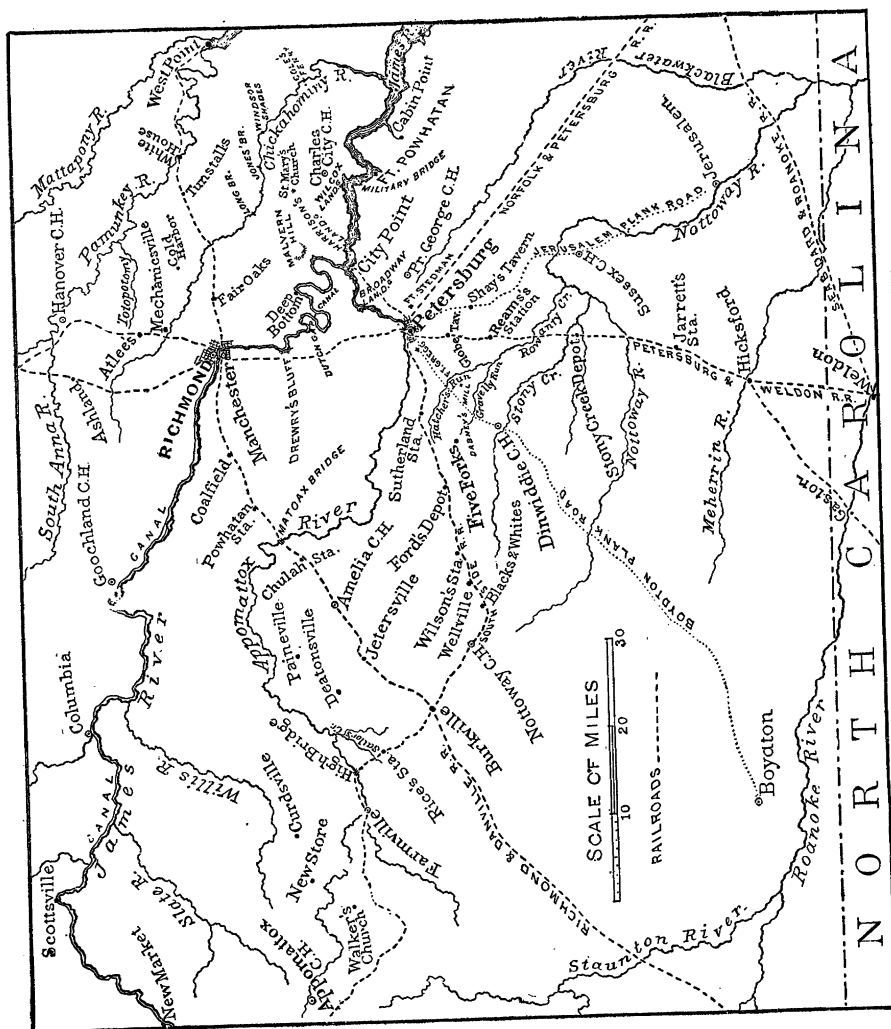
CHAPTER XVIII

PETERSBURG

CH. XVIII.

1864.

DURING all the summer campaign of General Grant, while he was intent upon breaking and crushing the army of Lee, he never lost sight of the equally important work of breaking his lines of communication and cutting off his supplies. His first attempt in the Shenandoah Valley having failed by the misadventure of Sigel at New Market on the 15th of May, he asked for the removal of that officer, and Major-General Hunter was appointed to supersede him. From Spotsylvania and Jericho Ford Grant sent orders for Hunter to move up the Valley as far as Charlottesville and Lynchburg if he found it possible; to destroy railroads and canals, and either get back to his original base or join the Army of the Potomac, as circumstances might decide. Hunter moved away with his usual alacrity, and on the 5th of June struck a force of three brigades under General W. E. Jones at Piedmont, and after a severe engagement routed it, killing Jones and capturing 1500 prisoners and some guns. Three days later, he formed a junction with Crook and Averill at Staunton and moved towards Lynchburg, while J. C. Vaughn, who had succeeded to Jones's com-



MAP OF THE PETERSBURG AND APPOMATTOX CAMPAIGNS.

mand, fell back on the railroad towards Charlottesville. General Lee, who was naturally disturbed by this menacing expedition, hurried Breckinridge off with a division to meet it, and on the 13th Early, with his corps, was dispatched to the Shenandoah Valley, with orders to strike Hunter's force in rear and destroy it; then to move down the Valley, cross the Potomac, and threaten Washington. This force moved with great celerity and part of it reached Lynchburg in advance of Hunter, who arrived before the place on the 16th of June. There was some skirmishing for two days between the opposing forces, but Hunter, owing to the exhaustion of his ammunition, was unable to give battle, and was forced to retire by way of Kanawha over a difficult and arduous route through West Virginia, which movement left the Valley open to Early in his march northward.

But before these movements were developed, General Grant, desiring thoroughly to break the enemy's communications and interrupt his supplies north of the James, before crossing that river, ordered General Sheridan to march to Charlottesville, join Hunter in the destruction of the Virginia Central Railroad and return with him to the Army of the Potomac. He got off on the morning of the 7th of June, and Lee, as soon as the movement was reported, sent after him General Wade Hampton with two divisions of cavalry, his own and Fitzhugh Lee's. They met, and a sharp cavalry fight ensued at Trevilian station in which Hampton was worsted and driven several miles. But Sheridan learned from his prisoners that Hunter had moved on Lynchburg and that a con-

CH. XVIII.

June, 1864.

June 11.

CH. XVIII. siderable infantry force had passed up the railroad towards Charlottesville; that a junction was therefore impossible, and that he could not effect the object of his expedition in the presence of so large a force of the enemy. There was some sharp fighting on the 12th, and on the night of that day Sheridan withdrew. He reached White House on the 21st, where he supplied his troops, and the next day started with an immense train to join the Army of the Potomac south of the James.

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Meantime General Grant had executed the most important of all his turning movements with notable ability and success. His object was now to get south of Richmond and to destroy the lines of supply on that side of the Confederate army. After the destruction of the Virginia Central road, the capture of Petersburg would leave but one railroad in their hands, the Richmond and Danville; this would be ultimately severed, and Richmond must fall. He chose, as his place of crossing the James, a guarded and sheltered spot near Wilcox's landing; far enough from Richmond to give an opportunity for attacking Lee out of his intrenchments if he should attempt to interrupt the passage. All Grant's dispositions for the great movement were skillful and judicious. Warren, with the Fifth Corps, preceded by Wilson's cavalry, crossed the Chickahominy before daylight on the 13th, and took positions on roads leading to Richmond, creating the impression in General Lee's mind that an advance upon that city was in progress. The rest of the army was then withdrawn from its works, and moved by long and rapid marches to Wilcox's landing, where the battalion of engineers con-

Hum-
phreys,
"The
Virginia
Campaign
of '64
and '65,"
p. 199.

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structed, between four in the afternoon and midnight, a bridge which was one of the most notable triumphs of military engineering in our times. The river was 2100 feet wide, 15 fathoms deep in mid-channel, and there was a strong tidal current with a rise and fall of four feet. One hundred and one pontoons were required; they were anchored to vessels moored above and below.

The Fifth Corps and Wilson's cavalry having accomplished their mission with perfect success withdrew from their menacing attitude, and the whole army with all its artillery and trains was south of the James by midnight of the 16th, General Wright covering the movement and crossing last. General Lee was still holding his force north of the river to protect Richmond from the attack he thought imminent from that quarter. The whole movement was so far brilliantly successful. Grant announced his action to the Government at Washington. The President received the news with joy and gratitude. In spite of all assertions to the contrary, he had no apprehensions for the safety of Washington while Lee was kept busy somewhere else. He telegraphed to Grant on the 15th, "I have just received your dispatch of 1 p. m. yesterday. I begin to see it. You will succeed. God bless you all."

The first great object of the movement was the seizure of Petersburg. It was a place of the utmost importance, nothing less than an outlying bastion of Richmond, whose possession by the National troops made the tenure of the rebel capital impossible. An important expedition to effect this momentous capture had been confided to General W.

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Humphreys,
"The
Virginia
Campaign
of '64 and
'65,"
p. 203.

June, 1864.

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CH. XVIII. F. Smith. With some 16,000 men he started on the morning of the 15th, under verbal orders from General Butler, to "attack Petersburg as soon as possible." The work had been represented to him at Butler's headquarters as very easy; he was told that "he could ride over the fortifications on horse-back";¹ that from the heights on the Appomattox his sharp-shooters could clear out the Confederate garrison, which consisted only of a few militia. On arriving before the place, however, which he did about noon, after sharp skirmishing on the road, he found the works so much stronger than he had been led to expect and the artillery fire from them so well sustained that he came to the erroneous conclusion that they must also be fully supported by infantry. He therefore proceeded with the greatest caution and deliberation. Having no engineer on his staff he thought himself compelled to reconnoitre the enemy's position in person, and, not willing to risk an assault in column under such a heavy fire from the guns, he concluded to open with his own artillery and then try to carry the works with a strong skirmish line. But at this juncture he found his chief of artillery had without authority taken the horses to the rear to water them, and an hour of inestimable value was thus lost.

It was seven o'clock and the sun was setting when his attack was made. His skirmishers sprang gallantly forward to their work and captured the intrenchments, which were immediately occupied by the lines of battle. A mile and a half of the rebel

¹ We take these particulars of General Smith's operations from an unpublished letter of his to Senator Solomon Foot, dated December 12, 1864, which was given by the Senator to the President.



GENERAL WINFIELD S. HANCOCK.

works, with sixteen guns, were in his hands at nine o'clock; the city of Petersburg, defended only by a force of about 2500 Confederates, seemed at his mercy. An hour more of daylight might have hastened the capture of Richmond by six months. Even as it was, General Smith was severely blamed by General Grant for not having pushed forward in the darkness and possessed himself of the town. But he felt that the risk of a night march forward over unknown obstacles, in the presence of an enemy, was too great; he preferred to hold what he had gained rather than incur the danger of a disaster by groping in the dark about the enemy's inner line of works. He had heard that Lee was crossing at Drewry's Bluff and he did not know what force might be confronting him. He knew that Hancock's corps was on its way to support him, and when, late at night, it arrived, he asked Hancock to relieve his own troops in the captured works, and feeling that he had done a good day's work, waited for morning. It was not Hancock's fault that he was not on the ground earlier. He had been delayed several hours in the morning waiting for rations, and at last was compelled to march without them. He says he was not informed until between five and six o'clock on the afternoon of the 15th that Petersburg was to be attacked that day; and Meade relieved him of all censure by saying, "Had General Hancock and myself been apprised in time of the contemplated movement against Petersburg and the necessity of his coöperation . . . he could have been pushed much earlier to the scene of operations."

In the night the golden opportunity passed

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Badeau,
"Military
History of
U. S.
Grant,"
Vol. II.,
p. 377.

CH. XVIII. away. Beauregard had acted with the greatest energy and promptness. He saw, far more plainly than General Lee, the point of danger; he unhesitatingly stripped the Bermuda Hundred lines and begged for troops to defend Petersburg, while Lee was holding all his forces in hand to fight Grant on the roads to Richmond between the Chickahominy and the James. Lee sent him, however, Hoke's division, which arrived during the night, and in the morning Smith and Hancock saw in front of them a new line of intrenchments, manned by veteran Confederate infantry; though Lee, still incredulous, so late as ten o'clock on the morning of the 16th telegraphed Beauregard that he did not know where Grant was, and could not strip the north bank. Butler's force at daylight had taken the intrenchments in front of Bermuda Hundred disgarnished by Beauregard, and captured much of the small force left to guard them; but in the evening of the same day Pickett's division, crossing from the north side, retook the works. So that nothing was lost to the Confederates by Beauregard's bold and judicious action, and Petersburg was saved to them; for on the morning of the 16th he had some fourteen thousand effective infantry supporting the powerful artillery of his intrenchments, and two days later the bulk of Lee's army was there.

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Now that the last chance of an easy victory was gone, Meade acted with all possible energy and spirit. Hancock was placed in command of all the troops on the ground, and the Second Corps, supported by portions of the Ninth and the Eighteenth to left and right, assaulted the in-

trenchments, carrying three redans with their connecting lines.

At dawn on the 17th R. B. Potter's division of the Ninth Corps, forming in silence in a deep ravine, obeying a whispered word of command, and without firing a shot, carried another succession of redans and connecting lines, with many guns and prisoners. There was heavy fighting all this day, resulting in constant encroachments by the National troops on the Confederate lines; and in the night Beauregard withdrew 500 or 1000 yards in rear of the line so hotly disputed, and intrenched himself in the new one with that rapidity and skill which both armies had attained. In the morning he was heavily reënforced by the Army of Northern Virginia, with General Lee in person at its head.

Meade, not knowing the full extent of the Confederate reënforcements, and being fully impressed with the immense importance of the capture of Petersburg, ordered another vigorous assault on the Confederate works to take place at noon on the 18th. This was made with the utmost spirit and gallantry: Hancock's corps, under Birney, their old commander having been disabled by the opening of his Gettysburg wounds; the Fifth, under the immediate command of Warren; the Ninth, under General Parke's personal direction, attacked again and again with high but fruitless valor; Barlow, Potter, Willcox, Griffin, and J. L. Chamberlain did all that could have been asked of them. The works were too powerful to be carried by assault, though ground was gained; the positions carried close to the enemy were everywhere intrenched, and the

CH. XVIII.

6 P. M.,
June 16.June 18,
1864.

CH. XVIII. National lines were established substantially as they remained until the war ended. Grant, at the close of the day, saw that all which was possible had been done, and he commanded that the fighting should cease; that the troops should be put under cover, and take the rest which had become indispensable. In the four days' struggle about ten thousand men had been lost on the Union side; there is no official statement of the Confederate losses — they were, of course, less, as they fought behind intrenchments, but were still not inconsiderable.

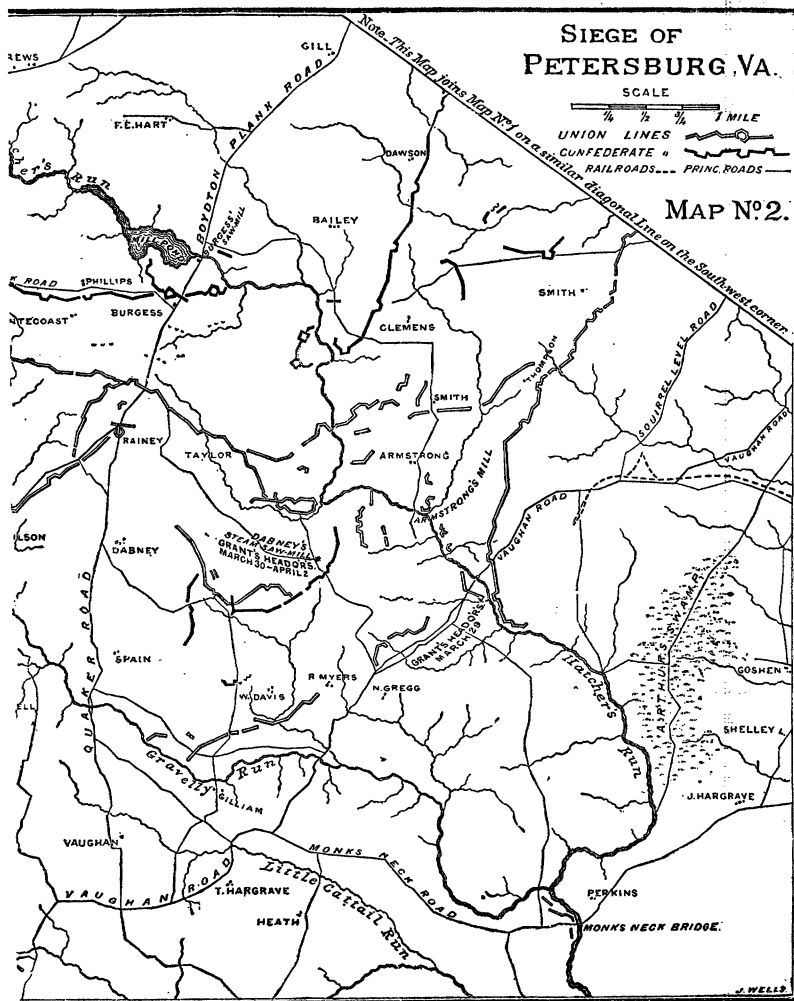
The Army of the Potomac was exhausted by its incessant and protracted exertions. Its long and arduous marches; its daily assaults upon an intrenched enemy, defended by entanglements in front and guarded by powerful artillery; its heavy losses in brave and experienced officers and veteran soldiers, unrelieved by any decided success, had begun to have their effect not only on the strength but the spirit of even that brave and patient army. It was time to put them also behind intrenchments, to give them some rest and protection. General Grant determined to invest Petersburg by a line of intrenchments, which might be held by a part of his troops, leaving the rest free for whatever movements might be required. General Butler, with the Army of the James, was assigned to the care of Bermuda Hundred and Deep Bottom on either side of the river, the two positions being connected by a pontoon bridge. About Petersburg the Army of the Potomac was disposed in this order from right to left: Burnside with the Ninth Corps, Warren with the Fifth, Birney with the Second, Wright with the Sixth; the last corps holding the

extreme left and being refused to the west and south. CH. XVIII.

Grant's first attempt at seizing the Weldon and South Side railroads was unsuccessful. The Second and Sixth Corps were moved to the left with that purpose on the 22d of June; but, not being well closed up, A. P. Hill's corps was thrust between them, and inflicted considerable damage, taking a large number of prisoners and some guns. A little ground was, however, gained and held, and the armies remained quiescent for several weeks, the Union army being busily engaged in intrenching and fortifying their lines. The position on the Jerusalem plank road, midway between the Norfolk and Weldon railroads, was made impregnable by two strong redoubts by the middle of July.

The cavalry in both armies was kept busy in constant raids. While Sheridan was away on his raid to Trevilian's, Wilson was sent with two divisions to destroy, if possible, all three of the railroads connecting Richmond with the South. He started on the 22d of June, breaking the Weldon road at Reams's Station, destroying thirty miles of the Lynchburg road and as much of the Danville road, where the two lines crossed at Burkesville Junction. He did not effect this without some keen fighting with the Confederate cavalry, and when, the object of his expedition being accomplished, he started to return, a heavy concentration of the enemy's cavalry was effected against him. A severe engagement took place at Stony Creek on the Weldon road, with indecisive results; and at Reams's Station, Wilson found himself confronted by a strong force of Confederate infantry

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CH. XVIII. and artillery which he was unable to dislodge. He
 June, 1864. was here compelled to retire and make the best of
 Humphreys, his way back to Petersburg, with a heavy loss in
 "The Virginia guns and wagons. His loss in killed and wounded
 Campaign of '64 was only 240, but 1261 were reported missing.
 and '65," Brilliant as these cavalry raids were, General Grant
 p. 241. in his "Memoirs" intimates that they cost more
 than they were worth. Both sides were very expert in repairing railroads after they seemed utterly destroyed; the Confederates, especially, were disheartened at the facility with which Sherman would run his trains a few hours after they had raided his tracks; so that it came to be a saying among them that Sherman carried duplicate tunnels in his baggage.

At this point General Humphreys, in his admirable history of this campaign, pauses to estimate the losses in the Union Army from the crossing of the Rapidan to the 1st of July. The Army of the Potomac lost in killed and wounded about 50,000, and including the missing 61,400; the Army of the James about 7000. A large number of regiments were mustered out; great numbers of sick were sent home. The constant policy of the Confederate authorities was to conceal their losses; there are even at this day no trustworthy estimates of them. The steadfast heart of the President sickened at the slaughter. In a dispatch to Sherman, on the 16th of July, Grant announced his intention to "make a desperate effort to get a position here which will hold the enemy without the necessity of so many men." The President, referring to this, telegraphed to Grant in these words: "Pressed as we are by lapse of time I am

Ibid., p. 242.

1864.

glad to hear you say this; and yet I do hope you may find a way that the effort shall not be desperate in the sense of great loss of life."

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July 17,
1864.

The dull, dry midsummer passed away with little accomplished by the Army of the Potomac. No rain fell for forty-six days together; the troops suffered greatly from thirst; the dust lay thick on the roads and the barren fields. The slightest movement of troops filled the air with suffocating clouds. There was no water in the springs or the ponds; the soldiers everywhere were forced to dig wells for themselves. But even amid these hardships they throve and soon recovered their spirits. General Lee, foreseeing the inevitable end if the siege of Petersburg was to endure indefinitely, and yet unwilling to risk a conflict in the open field, was anxious for Grant to attack him in his works. The hope that threatening Washington with a strong detachment might induce Grant to do this was one of the motives which led Lee to send Early down the Valley in the latter part of June. On the 20th he wrote to Jefferson Davis, "I still think it is our policy to draw the attention of the enemy to his own territory. It may force Grant to attack me, or to weaken his force." The movement was made with results which are more particularly mentioned in another place. Neither the Administration at Washington nor General Grant were especially disturbed. The Sixth Corps was sent north to meet Early and drive him south, and General Lee reporting the movement of troops on the river expresses his "fear that they are on the way to Washington," and his deep disappointment at such action. "It is so repugnant to Grant's

June 3d to
July 19th.
Humphreys,
"The
Virginia
Campaign
of '64
and '65,"
p. 243.

1864.

July 7, 1864.

CH. XVIII. principles and practice to send troops from him, that I had hoped before resorting to it he would have preferred attacking me." Four days later he wrote again to Mr. Davis; his dissatisfaction with Grant's conduct is confirmed. "I had hoped that General Grant rather than weaken his army would have attempted to drive us from our position. I fear I shall not be able to attack him to advantage." The menace upon Washington failed of its purpose; the siege of Petersburg continued without relaxation. The siege train was on the ground in the latter days of June; on the 9th of July Meade issued orders regulating the approaches of the Army of the Potomac in front of Burnside's and Warren's corps; days and nights were filled with the clamor of guns and the labors of the spade.

1864.
Report
Committee
on Conduct
of the War,
1864-65.
Part I.,
p. 244.

The most noteworthy incident of the summer — though it led to no significant result — was that of the mine in front of Burnside. Near the end of June Lieutenant-Colonel Henry Pleasants of the Forty-eighth Pennsylvania, a regiment composed chiefly of coal-miners, proposed to run a mine under that part of the Confederate works called Elliott's salient. The only advantage of the position was that the entrance to the gallery was in a sheltered ravine, which was concealed from the view of the enemy; and even this advantage proved illusory, as Beauregard soon became aware of the work which was going on, and promptly threw up intrenchments at the gorge of the salient, and planted batteries to give him a front and flank fire on the point of assault. The work was completed towards the end of July; it was a vast gallery, 511 feet long, with lateral branches of 38 feet each; eight maga-

zines were charged each with 1000 pounds of powder. While the excavation was going on Burnside had been drilling Edward Ferrero's colored division to make the charge when the mine should be exploded; but this arrangement being reported to General Meade on the 26th of July, and by him referred to General Grant, it did not meet their approval. This division having never been in action, General Meade was not sure of its steadiness; in case of disaster coming to it he would naturally apprehend severe criticism from Republican sources, on the charge that he was sacrificing the colored troops. Burnside seeing his judgment overruled in this respect then took the deplorable resolution of leaving the decision between his three white divisions to lot; and an evil chance, passing by the able and energetic commanders, Potter and O. B. Willcox, selected General J. H. Ledlie for a work to which he was totally inadequate.

On the night of the 26th of July, General Grant sent the Second Corps with a heavy force of cavalry to the north side of the James River, to join with Butler's forces in an attack upon the enemy's positions on that side. His object was twofold; first, to cut, if possible, the railroads between Richmond and the Anna River and disturb the enemy's operations in the Shenandoah; and, second, to cause the withdrawal of a large body of troops from Petersburg at the time of the explosion of the mine. The first purpose failed entirely; though a large body of the Confederates was moved north of the river it availed Grant nothing in the end. Some ground, it is true, was gained on the 27th; but the enemy reënforced so heavily on the 28th that no advan-

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1864.

Report
Committee
on Conduct
of the War,
1864-65.
Part I., pp.
3-5.

Grant,
Report.
"Memoirs."
Vol. II.,
p. 578.

July, 1864.

CH. XVIII. tage resulted to the Union troops from the fighting on that day, and Grant at once resolved to withdraw the Second Corps to the lines of Petersburg, to support the meditated assault. This was effected on the nights of the 28th and 29th.

July, 1864.

Report of
Lieut.-Col.
Pleasants.
Report
Committee
on Conduct
of the War,
1864-65.
Part I.
pp. 117, 118.

Report
Committee
on Conduct
of the War,
1864-65.
Part I.
p. 182.

On the morning of the 30th the mine was exploded at a quarter before five o'clock. The whole salient rose in the air, a vast mass of earth; and as the smoke and dust cleared away a crater 200 feet long, 50 feet wide, and 25 feet deep was disclosed where the rebel fort had been. Colonel Pleasants stood on the Union breastworks and watched the effect; his task, at least, had been well done. The enemy were for the moment stupefied by the catastrophe. They ran in horror from the crater on both sides; the breach was virtually four hundred yards in extent. Now was the moment for Burnside to pour his men through the gap and gain the crest of Cemetery Hill, which commanded the town of Petersburg. But the advance was languid. General Ledlie was suffering from sickness; he spent the morning in a bomb-proof. Burnside had neglected to level his parapets and remove the abatis in his front, and his leading division made their way slowly out of the works by the flank instead of in extended front. They pushed on, however, to the crater, and crowding into that narrow hole, stayed there, and no efforts could induce them to leave it. In the course of half an hour the enemy recovered from their surprise and began a furious fire from front and both flanks. Potter's division was sent in on the right, Willcox on the left. Each of them made some progress, but the frightful chaos and con-

fusion of the center division in the crater continued, and neither of them could hold what they had gained; and when at last Ferrero's colored division was sent forward without their commander, who considered it his duty to remain in the rear, they rushed to the front with great spirit, but under conditions which made disaster certain. Being badly led, they poured over the edge of the crater in great numbers, and although they did their best to get through to the other side they emerged with their formation shattered. Advancing towards the enemy they encountered a heavy fire of infantry and artillery, and were soon stampeded and driven back in great confusion.

General John W. Turner had by this time managed to get a division of Ord's corps forward through the disorder and charged with one brigade upon the enemy's works to the right of the crater, taking possession of about one hundred yards of their line; he was just giving the order to another brigade to go forward, when the retrograde rush of the stampeded troops swept his whole command backward to the Union lines. Warren on the left saw no opportunity to advance; the enemy in his front kept their works strongly manned, and the confusion in and about the crater was such that the troops already there were more than could be handled, and any addition to their numbers would only have increased the disaster. Grant saw early in the day that the affair was not prospering. He rode forward as far as he could go on horseback, and then went through to the front on foot. He soon convinced himself that the evil was beyond remedy; the impulse of the assault was gone; the

CH. XVIII.

July 30,
1864.Turner,
Testimony,
Report
Committee
on Conduct
of the War,
1864-65,
Part I,
pp. 119-121.

CH. XVIII. enemy had recovered from the shock of the surprise and were sweeping the edges of the crater and its approaches with a hot and destructive fire.

The Confederate infantry now advanced and assaulted the position, and although some good fighting was still done by Potter's command and part of Ord's, the huddled mass, in the intense heat, was unable to move, recover its formation, or its spirit. At half-past nine Meade in a dispatch to Burnside assumed that his attack had resulted in a repulse, and ordered "if, in his judgment, nothing further could be effected that he withdraw to his own lines, taking every precaution to get the men back safely." Burnside on receiving this order hurried to Meade's headquarters to protest against it. He thought he had not fought long enough; that there was still hope of carrying the crest; but Meade repeated the order in a peremptory manner — leaving, however, the time and manner of retiring to Burnside's discretion — and Burnside sent it to the crater at noon. The lamentable inefficiency which had marked every operation of the day still continued, and even the orders to retire were so languidly executed that a heavy loss in prisoners occurred at the crater and between the lines.¹

This unhappy day closed Burnside's military career. Meade, whose stern and fiery temper often

Hum-
phreys,
"The
Virginia
Campaign
of '64 and
'65,"
p. 265.

¹In Confederate accounts of this affair the usual misstatements of the numbers on both sides occur. The official returns show that the Army of the Potomac, on the 20th of July, had 37,984 effective infantry present for duty, equipped, and 10,280 cavalry; the Army of the James, by return of July

31st, 24,009; cavalry, 1880. The effective force of infantry of the Army of Northern Virginia (on the 10th of July) was 39,295; of cavalry, 8436. The Sixth Corps of the Army of the Potomac and the Second Corps of Lee's army were detached and not included in the returns.



GENERAL ORLANDO B. WILLCOX.

CH. XVIII.

got control of him on the battlefield, had sent some stinging dispatches in the course of the fight, to which Burnside had returned a resentful and contumacious reply; and after his troops had been driven from the crater he preserved a sullen silence, making no reply to Meade's anxious and angry questions. It was possibly this insubordinate attitude, as much as the failure of the attack, that induced Meade to prefer charges against Burnside. Grant also was eager for some process of censure. Two days after the fight he wrote to Meade speaking of "the miserable failure of Saturday. I think there will have to be an investigation of the matter. So fair an opportunity will probably never occur again for carrying fortifications; preparations were good, orders ample, and everything, so far as I could see, subsequent to the explosion of the mine shows that almost without loss the crest beyond the mine could have been carried; this would have given us Petersburg with all its artillery and a large part of the garrison."

Grant
to Meade,
Aug. 1, 1864.
Report
Committee
on Conduct
of the War,
1864-65.
Part I,
p. 221.

Burnside was relieved from command a few days after this battle. A court of inquiry ordered by the President, at the request of General Meade, over which General Hancock presided, censured General Burnside for the neglect of such preparations as would have insured success, Generals Ledlie and Ferrero and Colonel Z. R. Bliss, for inefficiency and positive misbehavior in action, and General Willcox for a lack of energy in pushing his division forward towards the crest; the court also, by implication, blamed Grant and Meade for not having put all the troops intended to coöperate under one command. Meade preferred charges against Burnside which

CH. XVIII. were never acted upon. The Committee on the Conduct of the War investigated the same matter, and came to a far different conclusion. The political orthodoxy of Burnside outweighed in their minds the purely military judgment of Grant and Meade; the change made by these generals in the plan of attack, substituting white for colored soldiers, was decided to be "the first and great cause of disaster." Their report justified Burnside in every particular, and censured Meade for everything that went wrong. But it was too late to restore Burnside to command. The war was ending by the time the committee reported, and his resignation, tendered on the very day of Lincoln's assassination, was accepted by President Johnson among his first official acts. Burnside returned to civil life, and entered at once upon a career of unbroken and eminent popularity and success.

ApL 14, 1865.

After this disastrous failure the engineers, under General Grant's orders, went on perfecting the redoubts and the lines connecting them so that at the proper time the works might be held by a small force and the rest of the army be free to move upon the enemy's communications. But the summer wore away without the accomplishment of this purpose, though several more or less serious attempts in that direction were made. During the summer and autumn the attention of both Grant and Lee was constantly diverted to the operations in the Shenandoah to the neglect of important movements about Petersburg. Sheridan was assigned to that field of duty in which he was to win imperishable laurels; two divisions of cavalry under Wilson and Torbert were given him, and

Lee sent one of his best divisions under Kershaw to reënforce Early. Grant himself made two visits to that part of his command; one early in August, at the time he placed Sheridan in command, and one in September, when he gave him the order to begin his glorious campaign in the Valley, which resulted in the victory of Winchester. The Army of the Potomac during this period was by no means idle; besides their engineering work, several partial movements to right and left were made, with the result of extending the Union lines, and forcing the Confederates to give a corresponding extension to theirs; the effect of which was in all cases to weaken the inferior force. But even in those movements, Grant's mind was occupied rather with Sheridan and Early than with Lee.

Near the middle of August Grant was led to believe that Lee had made a detachment of three divisions of infantry and some cavalry from his army to reënforce Early, and he at once resolved to make a heavy demonstration north of the James to prevent the dispatch of any further forces to the Valley, and, if possible, to draw back those already sent. Hancock, who had resumed command of the Second Corps, and Birney, with a part of the Tenth, crossed the river and marched, on the 14th, along the three principal roads between the Chickahominy and the James, in the direction of Richmond. But they met the enemy everywhere in full force, under Field, Wilcox, and Mahone, and gained no special advantage, except in learning that no such force as Grant had apprehended had gone to Early, and in detaining a large body of troops in that neighborhood. Hancock was kept, however, for several

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CH. XVIII. days north of the James, maintaining a menacing attitude and skirmishing constantly, but forbidden to attack the Confederate works, as an assault, under existing circumstances, offered no probable chance of success.

Aug., 1864.

While this energetic demonstration was going on, General Warren was withdrawn from the lines before Petersburg (the Ninth Corps being stretched over the space vacated by the Fifth) and ordered to seize the Weldon road at the Globe Tavern, a point about four miles due south from Petersburg, and destroy it from that point as far south as possible. In this movement, also, Grant's constant preoccupation in regard to Sheridan is seen. "I want," he said, "to make such demonstrations as will force Lee to withdraw a portion of his troops from the Valley, so that Sheridan can strike a blow against the balance." He was under some temptation to go in person with a large detachment to Sheridan's assistance, but wisely concluded to stay where he was. This determination the President heartily approved and applauded. On the 17th he sent to Grant this terse and vehement dispatch, which indicates in a singular manner the close moral sympathy between the two men: "I have seen your dispatch expressing your unwillingness to break your hold where you are. Neither am I willing. Hold on with a bulldog grip, and chew and choke as much as possible.—A. LINCOLN, President."

Lincoln to
Grant,
Aug. 17,
1864. MS.

Warren moved out at dawn on the 18th, seized the Weldon road at the place directed, and immediately began the work of destruction. A force sent by Beauregard under General Heth attacked him about two o'clock, and a sharp action ensued,

resulting in the loss of about a thousand men on each side, the Unionists finally holding the field. The next day, both sides having been strongly reënforced, an impetuous attack by the Confederates, now under the command of A. P. Hill, produced for a time some confusion on the right of Warren's force; but Warren speedily reformed his troops and drove the Confederates back to their intrenchments. On the 20th, Warren, feeling sure that Lee would not willingly acquiesce in the loss of the Weldon road, and that he would have to fight further to retain the advantage he had gained, took up a stronger position a mile in rear, and awaited the attack of the enemy. This came on the 21st; Hill opening with a severe artillery fire and assaulting at two o'clock with great energy. He was, however, completely repulsed, leaving his dead and wounded and several hundred prisoners in Warren's hands. No further attempt was made on his position. The Weldon road, thus boldly clutched and bravely held, remained in the hands of the Union army till the war ended.

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The mere possession of a point on the road was not all that General Grant desired. By destroying the road to Rowanty Creek, some thirteen miles beyond Warren's left, he could force the Confederates to haul their supplies a distance of thirty miles. General Hancock, with two divisions of infantry and Gregg's cavalry, was sent to accomplish this work, and did it so expeditiously that by the night of the 24th the destruction of the road was complete to a cross road three miles south of Reams's Station, leaving only five miles of the work undone. But General Lee could not afford to allow this work

CH. XVIII. of destruction to go on undisturbed, and therefore sent A. P. Hill with a large force of infantry, cavalry, and artillery to prevent it. He attacked Hancock on the 25th, and in spite of admirable conduct of the Union general and his subordinates, Miles and Gibbon, they were driven from their position with considerable loss. Night coming on, Hill made no effort to pursue his advantage and both parties returned to their respective intrenchments near Petersburg.

Aug., 1864.

In this battle, as in nearly every engagement since Cold Harbor, there was apparent a certain loss of morale in the army. In the operations of the week before, north of the James, the utmost efforts of such intrepid soldiers as Barlow and Gibbon could not get the requisite work out of their troops, and in this affair, the splendid personal conduct of Hancock and Miles was not enough to inspire their commands. The causes of this laxity were not difficult to discover. The weather was hot and enervating; the constant marching and lack of repose had wearied the soldiers; they were composed in great numbers of raw recruits not inured to such warfare; and, worse than all, the terrible loss in competent and experienced officers, which had been suffered on the dozen sanguinary fields of May, June, and July, had for the moment rendered the Army of the Potomac no longer the elastic and perfect tempered weapon it had been in other days, and which it became once more after a few months of discipline and drill.

1864.

After Sheridan's victory in the Shenandoah, and his hot pursuit of Early, the President was anxious lest Lee should detach a large force to reënforce

Early; and Grant, to prevent this, and hold Lee in position, made another movement against the Confederate lines north of the James. He sent Ord and Birney, with the Eighteenth and Tenth Army Corps, on the 28th of September, to threaten Richmond from that direction and to take advantage of any favorable opening they might be able to find, or make, in the enemy's lines. By daylight the next day the whole force was over the river and moving swiftly upon the Confederate skirmishers. At first all went prosperously with Ord's column. George J. Stannard's division captured Fort Harrison, an important Confederate work, with sixteen guns and some prisoners, after a gallant fight in which General Hiram Burnham was killed. But in the attempt to push his success by capturing a redan by the riverside, General Ord was severely wounded; and his troops, under General C. A. Heckman, met with a serious repulse in the effort to carry Fort Gilmer by storm. CH. XVIII.

1864.

Grant,
"Memoirs."
Vol. II.,
p. 333.

Birney on the right carried the skirmish line on the New Market road, and then at the order of General Grant, who had arrived at Fort Harrison, assaulted Fort Gilmer with Adelbert Ames's division and William Birney's brigade of colored troops. The attack was made with the greatest energy; the colored soldiers rushing to the ditch with splendid gallantry and climbing to the parapet on each other's shoulders, only to be killed when they reached it. General Ewell commanded the Confederate troops, under the eye of Lee, who was present on the field. Though all efforts to take Fort Gilmer proved fruitless, the National troops established themselves firmly in the captured Fort

CH. XVIII. Harrison and with astonishing celerity converted it under the enemy's fire into an inclosed work. A heavy force was concentrated by Lee to retake it, and on the afternoon of the 30th General Anderson, commanding Longstreet's Corps, assaulted the work, supported by a heavy fire of Confederate artillery. Stannard, in the fort, reserved his musketry until the rebel columns emerged from the underbrush, and then delivered a deadly volley which swept them from the ground. Three times the attack was made and as often repulsed, though the resolute Stannard lost his arm in the second assault. The losses in the two days were about even, some 2000 on the Confederate side and 2272 among the Union troops. The fort was never retaken.

1864.

During these operations General Meade was directed to make such demonstrations to his left as should prevent any considerable force from being sent to the other side of the river, and on the 30th a strong reconnaissance was made under command of Warren, which captured the Confederate intrenchments at the junction of the Squirrel Level and Poplar Spring roads. Pushing on from that position in the direction of the Boydton Plank road and the South Side Railroad, the National troops under Parke and Potter met with a severe repulse from a force commanded by Heth and C. M. Wilcox, which General A. P. Hill, who had succeeded Beauregard in command at Petersburg, had thrown out to meet them. The next day, however, General Parke advanced again, with sharp skirmishing, and established a line about a mile from the enemy's, which was at once



GENERAL JOHN G. PARKE.

firmly connected with the works on the Weldon CH. XVIII. road and was not thereafter disturbed.

The principal event of October was the campaign of Early against Sheridan, which ended in the crushing defeat of the Confederates at Cedar Creek. Grant's anxiety about the Valley prevented any important operations during the early part of this month. The Confederates under C. W. Field and Hoke made a violent assault upon Kautz on the 6th of October, driving him from his position on the Darby road and capturing his guns; but venturing to attack the intrenched infantry lines they were severely repulsed. A week later, General Butler in his turn assaulted the Confederate works on the north of the James and was defeated with considerable loss. 1864.

On the 27th, the Army of the Potomac made one last effort to get possession of the South Side Railroad. A sufficient force was left in the redoubts to hold them; all the available infantry, amounting to some 35,000, with a due proportion of artillery and about 3000 horse, under Gregg, on the 27th moved to the left under the command of Hancock and Warren. The morning was dark and rainy; there were unavoidable delays in the start. The movement was not a surprise and the enemy was encountered everywhere in force. The different commands met with some partial success during the morning, and at two o'clock the leading corps was still six miles from the railroad. The movement had failed, and Grant ordered the troops back to their lines. But they were not even to accomplish this order without serious disturbance. The roads were difficult; the topography unknown to the

Hum-
phreys,
"The
Virginia
Campaign
of '64
and '65,"
p. 295.

CH. XVIII. National commanders. There was a considerable gap between the forces of Hancock and those of Warren, and through this, late in the afternoon, the Confederates under William Mahone rushed and made a vigorous attack on Hancock's right and rear. Hancock pulled his force together with wonderful readiness and address, and, assisted by T. W. Egan, Gershom Mott, and Gregg, turned upon Mahone and drove him from the field. By this time it was dark, and the next day the troops were withdrawn to their lines. This action is called the battle of Hatcher's Run.

In support of this movement General Butler made a demonstration on the same day on the north side of the James which was unsuccessful. His forces under Weitzel were met by the local defenses under Longstreet, who had recovered from his wounds and been assigned to command a week before, and were roughly handled. The Union loss was over a thousand men; that of the Confederates much less. This ended the active operations of the year so far as concerned any grand movement by the Army of the Potomac. They were still employed in defending and strengthening their lines and in occasional demonstrations against the enemy's communications; so that by the 7th of February, 1865, the Union lines reached to Hatcher's Run, and the Weldon road was destroyed to Hicks's Ford. But the hard fighting ended with the close of October. The troops had reached a dangerous condition of weariness. The frightful losses in competent officers and veteran soldiers could not be compensated by any number of raw recruits. Warren said that at the time of the af-

fair at Hatcher's Run 3913 of his men had never fired a musket and that 1649 of them were ignorant of the manual. Hancock gives the same significant testimony. General Parke in his report of the movement of September 30 says: "The large amount of raw material in the ranks has diminished greatly the efficiency of the corps." The composition of the army was so changed by the inferior material obtained by drafting and the heavy bounties, that a rigid system of instruction and discipline was necessary to make the new men homogeneous. It was no longer the old historic Army of the Potomac. But the work of the winter wrought a rapid transformation, and when, in the early spring, the order "Forward" was given the troops sprang to the summons and finished the war.

CH. XVIII.

Ham-
phreys,
"The
Virginia
Campaign
of '64
and '65,"
p. 296.

1864.

1865.

CHAPTER XIX

RECONSTRUCTION

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WE have related in former chapters the successive acts of President Lincoln on the question of reconstruction; the appointment of military governors in insurrectionary States; his amnesty and reconstruction proclamation of December 8, 1863; the local measures to organize loyal State governments in Arkansas, Louisiana, and Tennessee under that proclamation; his veto of the reconstruction act passed by Congress in July, 1864; and his announcement in the proclamation explaining his veto that he declined to commit himself inflexibly to any exclusive plan.

The difficulty of effecting reconstruction strictly in conformity with any assumed legal or constitutional theories appears clearly enough in the case of Virginia. It will be remembered that when the spontaneously chosen Wheeling Convention of August, 1861, repudiated the secession ordinance of the Richmond Convention, the two Houses of Congress recognized the restored State government of Virginia, having Governor Peirpoint as its executive head, by admitting to seats the Senators sent to Washington by the reconstructed Legislature, and the Representatives elected by popular

vote. Full reconstruction being thus recognized by both the Executive and Legislative departments of the National Government, within two years from the time of this recognition West Virginia was organized and admitted to the Union as a separate State, leaving the remaining territory of Virginia within the recognition and rights accorded the whole of the original State. As soon as West Virginia was admitted Governor Peirpoint, with the archives and personnel of the reconstructed State government, removed from Wheeling to Alexandria and continued the executive functions which the President and Congress had recognized before the State was divided. The terms of the Representatives in Congress had expired, and within the diminished territorial limits (with a single exception)¹ no new elections were held which were satisfactory to the House of Representatives, under its constitutional prerogative to admit or reject. But the Senators, elected for longer terms, remained in their seats in unquestioned exercise of their functions, representing in its full authority and power the legislative presence of the State of Virginia in the Senate and in the Union; and this was but repeating

¹ Joseph Segar was voted for in the First District of Virginia at an election held March 15, 1862, pursuant to writs issued by Governor Peirpoint, who gave him a certificate. The committee on elections reported itself unable to find any reasons sustaining the claim, and asked to be discharged from its further consideration; but a more liberal member, John W. Noell, appealed

directly to the House asking that the claimant be seated simply in virtue of the Governor's certificate, and without scrutiny into the circumstances attending the election; and the question being taken on this amendment it was decided in the affirmative, the yeas being 71, the nays 47. Compare D. W. Bartlett, "Contested Election Cases in Congress," pp. 414-418.

CHAP. XIX. the action which the Senate had taken in the case of Tennessee and of Andrew Johnson as its loyal United States Senator, and by the House of Representatives in the cases of Horace Maynard and Andrew J. Clements.

But while constitutional theory was thus fulfilled and perfect, the practical view of the matter certainly presented occasion for serious criticism. The State government which Governor Peirpoint brought from Wheeling to Alexandria could make no very imposing show of personal influence, official emblems, or practical authority. The territorial limits in which it could pretend to exercise its functions were only such as lay within the Union military lines: a few counties contiguous to Washington, two counties on the Eastern Shore, the vicinage of Fort Monroe, and the cities of Norfolk and Portsmouth. The bulk of what remained of the original State lay south and west of Richmond, subordinate and tributary to the rebel capital and Government. Nevertheless Governor Peirpoint made the best of his diminished jurisdiction; gathered a little Legislature about him at Alexandria, which went through the forms of enacting laws, and even ventured upon the expedient of authorizing the election of a State Convention, by an act passed December 21, 1863, under which act delegates were elected who assembled in convention on February 13, 1864. This Convention remained in session until April 7, on which day they adopted and published an amended constitution for the State of Virginia, which among other changes declared that "slavery and involuntary servitude (except for crime) is hereby abol-

1864.

ished and prohibited in this State forever."¹ An ordinance was also adopted on April 4, providing for the establishment of the restored government of Virginia. Under this ordinance and amended constitution Governor Peirpoint carried on his administration, clearly not with the normal health and vigor of an average State government, and yet showing within its circumscribed and fluctuating limits a degree of popular acceptance, or, to say the least, of popular toleration, that justified its continued recognition under the constitutional theory under which the President and the Congress had acknowledged and recognized it before the division of the State.

The details of Governor Peirpoint's administration are of interest to general history only so far as they touch the questions of constitutional authority which were raised, and in one of which the opinion and interference of President Lincoln were directly invoked. During the spring and summer of 1864 the city of Norfolk lay within the command of General B. F. Butler, and, under him, of Brigadier-General G. F. Shepley; and a question arose between the civil authorities under Governor Peirpoint, and the military authorities under Butler, about the regulation of the liquor traffic in Norfolk and vicinity. The civil authorities wished to continue the collec-

¹ This same Legislature, which Henry Winter Davis sneered at in the House of Representatives as the "Common Council of Alexandria," ratified the Thirteenth Amendment on the 9th day of February, 1865; and while this ratification may be said to have been like Mercurio's

wound, "not so deep as a well, nor so wide as a church door," it effectually served to help make up the necessary number of twenty-seven States whose action made the amendment a vital part of the Constitution of the United States. "Constitution of the State of Virginia," etc.

CHAP. XIX. tion of licenses imposed by existing Virginia laws; the military authorities undertook to give a few firms a monopoly of the importation, in order to keep it under better control. When the small retailers refused to pay their licenses under Virginia laws, they were indicted in the local courts; and to circumvent these indictments, General Shepley issued an order on June 22, 1864, providing that "on the day of the ensuing municipal election in the city of Norfolk a poll will be opened at the several places of voting, and separate ballot-boxes will be kept open during the hours of voting, in which voters may deposit their ballots, 'yes' or 'no,' upon the following question: Those in favor of continuing the present form of municipal government during the existence of military occupation will vote 'yes.' Those opposed to it will vote 'no.'"

Special
Orders,
No. 50.

Peirpoint,
Proclama-
tion,
June 22,
1864.

1864.

Naturally enough, Governor Peirpoint resented this action, and immediately issued a proclamation protesting against it as a revolutionary proceeding in violation of the Constitution of the United States, adding, "No loyal citizen, therefore, is expected to vote on the proposed question"; and repeated his criticism in a vigorous pamphlet, in which he descanted upon the "abuses of military power." Upon this General Butler took up the cudgel in behalf of his subordinate, and in a general order, dated June 30, discussed the incident at some length in the pungent phraseology which he knew how to use upon occasion, alluding to Peirpoint as "a person who calls himself Governor, . . . pretending to be the head of the restored government of Virginia, which government is unrecognized by the Congress, laws,

and Constitution of the United States." The general's order further recited that as the loyal citizens of Norfolk had voted against the further trial of the experiment of municipal government, "therefore it is ordered that all attempts to exercise civil office and power, under any supposed city election, within the city of Norfolk and its environs, must cease, and the persons pretending to be elected to civil offices at the late election, and those heretofore elected to municipal offices since the rebellion, must no longer attempt to exercise such functions; and upon any pretense or attempt so to do, the military commandant at Norfolk will see to it that the persons so acting are stayed and quieted."

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General
Orders,
June 30,
1864.

Meanwhile Governor Peirpoint had appealed by a memorial to the President, and enlisted the sympathy and assistance of the Attorney-General of the United States, who, on July 11, wrote the President a long official letter setting forth his sense of the serious military encroachment by General Butler upon civil law and the authority of Peirpoint as the Governor of Virginia. To this in turn, under date of August 1, General Butler responded with a letter of forty pages in caustic criticism of Peirpoint's government and administration as a "useless, expensive, and inefficient thing, unrecognized by Congress, unknown to the Constitution of the United States, and of such character that there is no command in the Decalogue against worshiping it, it being the likeness of nothing in the heavens above, the earth beneath, or the waters under the earth." The general then extended his animadversion to At-

Bates
to Lincoln,
July 11,
1864.
MS.

CHAP. XIX.

Butler to
Lincoln,
Aug. 1, 1864.
MS.

torney-General Bates, accusing him of a plot to create a conflict between the civil and military authorities. In the quarrel each party accused the other of aiding and being aided by only secessionists and traitors, and the argument of each, passing beyond questions of fact, entered on the discussion of theory and constitutional law.

It was easy for President Lincoln to see that the controversy, though involving a grave constitutional principle, was begun in anger and spite, and had degenerated into an interchange of epithets. He did not allow it to ruffle his temper, occupied as he was at the time with vastly more serious matters. The contention had already pretty well exhausted itself when, on the 9th of August, he drafted with his own hand the following reply to General Butler:

1864.

Your paper of the — about Norfolk matters is received, as also was your other on the same general subject, dated, I believe, some time in February last. This subject has caused considerable trouble, forcing me to give a good deal of time and reflection to it. I regret that crimination and recrimination are mingled in it. I surely need not to assure you that I have no doubt of your loyalty and devoted patriotism; and I must tell you that I have no less confidence in those of Governor Peirpoint and the Attorney-General. The former, at first, as the loyal Governor of all Virginia, including that which is now West Virginia, in organizing and furnishing troops, and in all other proper matters, was as earnest, honest, and efficient, to the extent of his means, as any other loyal governor.

The inauguration of West Virginia as a new State left to him, as he assumed, the remainder of the old State; and the insignificance of the parts which are outside of the rebel lines and consequently within his reach, certainly gives a somewhat farcical air to his dominion; and I suppose he, as well as I, has considered that it could be

useful for little else than as a nucleus to add to. The Attorney-General only needs to be known to be relieved from all question as to loyalty and thorough devotion to the National cause; constantly restraining as he does my tendency to clemency for rebels and rebel sympathizers. But he is the law officer of the Government, and a believer in the virtue of adhering to law. CHAP. XIX.

Coming to the question itself, the military occupancy of Norfolk is a necessity with us. If you, as department commander, find the cleansing of the city necessary to prevent pestilence in your army; street lights and a fire department necessary to prevent assassinations and incendiarism among your men and stores; wharfage necessary to land and ship men and supplies; a large pauperism, badly conducted, at a needlessly large expense to the Government, and find also that these things, or any of them, are not reasonably well attended to by the civil Government, you rightfully may and must take them into your own hands. But you should do so on your own avowed judgment of a military necessity, and not seem to admit that there is no such necessity, by taking a vote of the people on the question.

Nothing justifies the suspending of the civil by the military authority but military necessity, and of the existence of that necessity the military commander, and not a popular vote, is to decide. And whatever is not within such necessity should be left undisturbed.

In your paper of February you fairly notified me that you contemplated taking a popular vote; and if fault there be, it was my fault that I did not object then, which I probably should have done had I studied the subject as closely as I have since done. I now think you would better place whatever you feel is necessary to be done on this distinct ground of military necessity, openly discarding all reliance for what you do on any election. I also think you should so keep accounts as to show every item of money received and how expended.

The course here indicated does not touch the case when the military commander, finding no friendly civil government existing, may, under the sanction or direction of the President, give assistance to the people to inaugurate one.

Autograph

CHAP. XIX.

One is always surprised at the ease with which the President took up these cases of contention between his officials, and by a few sentences pointed out the law and the remedy with such clearness as to make it seem that a child ought not to have erred in the original decision. But more admirable still is the benignant and charitable spirit with which he overlooks and excuses the vanity and petulance which so frequently produced them. In this case he only expressed blame to himself for the annoyance and labor growing out of the defective judgment obscured by bad temper of those whose duty it was to have relieved him from burdens of this character. But even after Mr. Lincoln had written this generous correction he felt it wiser not immediately to send it, and delayed doing so until he learned that General Butler was about to repeat his error. On the 21st of December following the President again wrote him:

1864.

On the 9th of August last I began to write you a letter, the inclosed being a copy of so much as I then wrote. So far as it goes, it embraces the views I then entertained, and still entertain. A little relaxation of complaints made to me on the subject, occurring about that time, the letter was not finished and sent. I now learn, correctly I suppose, that you have ordered an election similar to the one mentioned, to take place on the Eastern Shore of Virginia. Let this be suspended, at least, until conference with me, and obtaining my approval.

Lincoln
to Butler.
Autograph
MS.

The main interest to history in these letters of the President to General Butler consists in the direction that he must keep his acts and orders clearly within the authority of military necessity, and leave undisturbed the existing structure of civil government, except where the former was

imperatively needed to transcend or temporarily supersede the latter. But quite as distinctly as this positive direction to the general is the silent but significant implication in these letters that in the absence of such military necessity the civil authority of Governor Peirpoint must continue to be recognized as the executive authority of the State of Virginia. Or, in other words, that, so far as the Executive Department of the Government of the United States was concerned, Virginia was a State in the Union, notwithstanding her pretended secession, notwithstanding the division of the State by the erection and admission of West Virginia into the Union, notwithstanding the limited territory controlled by Federal troops, notwithstanding the limited power exercised by Governor Peirpoint. Though the Governor's dominion might have a "farcical air," and be "useful for little else than as a nucleus to add to," it nevertheless was such a nucleus, and useful for that purpose, and was therefore neither to be ignored nor destroyed.

The President exhibited the same consistency of opinion and tenacity of purpose in regard to the other States which had begun the work of reconstruction. His letter to General Steele to give the government and people of Arkansas support and protection notwithstanding Congress had refused to admit her Senators and Representatives to seats has been quoted, and he applied the same policy to Louisiana, the question of whose restoration to the Union remained a prominent issue before Congress. As in the case of Virginia, it was not alone the malcontents in Congress and in politics who gave the President annoyance in this matter.

Ante,
Vol. VIII.,
p. 418.

CHAP. XIX. General S. A. Hurlbut had temporarily succeeded Banks in command at New Orleans, and to him Mr. Lincoln was forced to send an admonition somewhat more peremptory in its tone than was habitual with him. Under date of November 14, 1864, he wrote:

Few things, since I have been here, have impressed me more painfully than what, for four or five months past, has appeared as bitter military opposition to the new State government of Louisiana. I still indulged some hope that I was mistaken in the fact; but copies of a correspondence on the subject between General Canby and yourself, and shown me to-day, dispel that hope. A very fair proportion of the people of Louisiana have inaugurated a new State government, making an excellent new constitution—better for the poor black man than we have in Illinois. This was done under military protection, directed by me, in the belief, still sincerely entertained, that with such a nucleus around which to build we could get the State into position again sooner than otherwise. In this belief a general promise of protection and support, applicable alike to Louisiana and other States, was given in the last annual message. During the formation of the new government and constitution they were supported by nearly every loyal person, and opposed by every secessionist. And this support and this opposition, from the respective standpoints of the parties, was perfectly consistent and logical. Every Unionist ought to wish the new government to succeed; and every disunionist must desire it to fail. Its failure would gladden the heart of Slidell in Europe, and of every enemy of the old flag in the world. Every advocate of slavery naturally desires to see blasted and crushed the liberty promised the black man by the new constitution. But why General Canby and General Hurlbut should join on the same side is to me incomprehensible.

Of course, in the condition of things at New Orleans, the military must not be thwarted by the civil authority; but when the Constitutional Convention, for what it deems a breach of privilege, arrests an editor in no way

CHAP. XIX.

connected with the military, the military necessity for insulting the Convention and forcibly discharging the editor is difficult to perceive. Neither is the military necessity for protecting the people against paying large salaries fixed by a legislature of their own choosing very apparent. Equally difficult to perceive is the military necessity for forcibly interposing to prevent a bank from loaning its own money to the State. These things, if they have occurred, are, at the best, no better than gratuitous hostility. I wish I could hope that they may be shown to not have occurred. To make assurance against misunderstanding, I repeat that in the existing condition of things in Louisiana, the military must not be thwarted by the civil authority; and I add that on points of difference the commanding general must be judge and master. But I also add that in the exercise of this judgment and control, a purpose, obvious, and scarcely unavowed, to transcend all military necessity, in order to crush out the civil government, will not be overlooked.

Lincoln
to Hurlbut,
Nov. 14,
1864. MS.

And a similar admonition, though in somewhat less imperative phrases, the President felt impelled to send to General E. R. S. Canby, who had been placed in command of the Military Division of West Mississippi. He wrote him as follows, under date of December 12, 1864:

I think it is probable that you are laboring under some misapprehension as to the purpose, or rather the motive, of the Government on two points—cotton, and the new Louisiana State government.

It is conceded that the military operations are the first in importance; and as to what is indispensable to these operations the department commander must be judge and master.

But the other matters mentioned I suppose to be of public importance also; and what I have attempted in regard to them is not merely a concession to private interest and pecuniary greed.

As to cotton. By the external blockade, the price is made certainly six times as great as it was. And yet the

CHAP. XIX. enemy gets through at least one-sixth part as much in a given period, say a year, as if there were no blockade, and receives as much for it as he would for a full crop in time of peace. The effect, in substance, is, that we give him six ordinary crops, without the trouble of producing any but the first; and at the same time leave his fields and his laborers free to produce provisions. You know how he keeps up his armies at home and procures supplies from abroad. For other reasons we cannot give up the blockade, and hence it becomes immensely important to us to get the cotton away from him. Better give him arms for it than let him, as now, get both guns and ammunition for it. But even this only presents part of the public interest to get out cotton. Our finances are greatly involved in the matter. The way cotton goes now carries so much gold out of the country as to leave us with paper currency only, and that so far depreciated as that for every hard dollar's worth of supplies we obtain, we contract to pay two and a half hard dollars hereafter. This is much to be regretted; and, while I believe we can live through it, at all events it demands an earnest effort on the part of all to correct it. And if pecuniary greed can be made to aid us in such effort, let us be thankful that so much good can be got out of pecuniary greed.

As to the new State government of Louisiana. Most certainly there is no worthy object in getting up a piece of machinery merely to pay salaries and give political consideration to certain men. But it is a worthy object to again get Louisiana into proper practical relations with the nation, and we can never finish this if we never begin it. Much good work is already done, and surely nothing can be gained by throwing it away.

I do not wish either cotton or the new State government to take precedence of the military while the necessity for the military remains; but there is a strong public reason for treating each with so much favor as may not be substantially detrimental to the military.

Lincoln to
Canby,
Dec. 12,
1864.

1864.

Meanwhile Congress had met on December 5, in its annual session, and the question of reconstruction was occupying in various forms the thoughts



GENERAL EDWARD R. S. CANBY.

of Members and Senators, though not with the same earnestness as during the summer session, when personal and factional politics bore so large an influence. Henry Winter Davis, whose reconstruction bill Lincoln had declined to sign, was, since that action had been sustained by the President's triumphant reelection, nursing his vindictive wrath in quiet, and allowed another member of the Special Committee on Rebellious States, Representative J. M. Ashley, to introduce a new bill in the House on the 15th of December. The bill was open to the principal objection for which the President had vetoed Mr. Davis's bill, in declaring a wholesale emancipation of slavery in rebellious States by act of Congress. But it contained a few modifications designed to conciliate opposition to it, one of them being a direct recognition of the reconstructed government in Louisiana; though, with singular inconsistency, it failed to embrace that of Arkansas, which could make at least as good a showing.

It soon became evident to the committee that it could not be passed in this form, nor if passed approved by the President; and on the 16th of January, 1865, Mr. Ashley offered a substitute for it, in which the committee tendered a further compromise by including Arkansas and Louisiana under certain conditions. The measure again meeting opposition from Republicans in this form, its consideration was postponed to February 1, and again delayed until February 18, before which day Mr. Ashley gave notice of further modification, induced as he explained by the passage of the Thirteenth Amendment. But the rapidly chang-

Pamphlet.

CHAP. XIX. ing political conditions were with equal rapidity
 1865. changing political opinions. On February 20, Representative Henry L. Dawes, whose position as Chairman of the House Committee on Elections had enabled him to study the reconstruction question with particular care, attacked Mr. Ashley's bill in a vigorous speech, declaring that "no form can be prescribed, no law laid down here, no unbending iron rule fixed by the central Government for the governing of that people, or prescribing the method in which they shall make their organic law. Each of them shall work out that problem for itself and in its own way. That form and system which is best adapted to Louisiana and Arkansas is quite different from that which is ultimately to be adopted in South Carolina and Georgia." Commenting on the difficulties which the committee had encountered in coming to a conclusion satisfactory to themselves, he stated that this was not only the fourth regular draft submitted by them, but that a fifth draft had been prepared and already printed by the House. After a strong plea in favor of the voluntary action of the people in their own localities, he urged that reconstruction should be recognized "whenever any one of these States comes up here, presenting a constitution republican in form, the workmanship of the loyal men of the State, and which is generally acquiesced in by them, and they have power enough within themselves to maintain it against all domestic violence."

"Globe,"
 Feb. 20,
 1865. v. 937.

Ibid., p. 934.

Ibid., v. 937.

After further discussion Mr. Ashley offered still another substitute, apparently the committee's "fifth draft," which contained the most sweeping

concession the special committee had yet made to the varying currents of political thought. Its last section provided: "That if the persons exercising the functions of governor and legislature under the rebel usurpation in any State heretofore declared to be in rebellion shall, before armed resistance to the National Government is suppressed in such State, submit to the authority of the United States, and take the oath to support the Constitution of the United States, and adopt by law the third provision prescribed in the eighth section of this act, and ratify the amendment to the Constitution of the United States proposed by Congress to the Legislatures of the several States on the 31st day of January, A. D. 1865, it shall be lawful for the President of the United States to recognize the said governor and legislature as the lawful State government of such State, and to certify the fact to Congress for its recognition: *Provided*, That nothing herein contained shall operate to disturb the boundary lines of any State heretofore recognized by and now represented in the Congress of the United States." This section, which under the supposed miraculous conversion would have required the President, in Tennessee for instance, to recognize the Government of Governor Harris and his rebel Legislature, instead of Governor Johnson and his loyal Convention, as the legal Government of Tennessee, was certainly a strange proposal from a faction which had denounced the President's plan, among other reasons, on the score of its dangerous leniency. It was the exact result which Mr. Lincoln in his letter to Governor Johnson, of September 11, 1863, had declared "must not be."

"Globe,"
Feb. 21,
1865, p. 968.

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"Globe,"
Feb. 21,
1865, p. 969.

Ibid..

The little speech which Mr. Ashley made in support of his changeling was spiritless and perfunctory. He said, with evident frankness: "It is very clear to my mind that no bill providing for the reorganization of loyal State governments in the Rebel States can pass this Congress. I am pretty sure that this bill, and all the amendments and substitutes offered, will fail to command a majority of this House." Henry Winter Davis rallied but feebly to the support of his discomfited colleague. His short speech was noticeable only for its continued accusation of the President as a selfish usurper, and for his ill-natured flings at his Republican colleagues of the House, who had changed their minds or refused to vote with him, as being influenced by the will of the President, and "prone to act upon the winking of authority." With all his recognized logic and eloquence Mr. Davis was one of those men who possessed the comforting faculty of seeing that everybody but himself was arbitrary, selfish, and subservient.

The undecided, vacillating, and shifting propositions of the committee demonstrated even more than discussion the impolicy, if not the impossibility, of effecting reconstruction upon any rigid preconceived theory. The House was unwilling to follow a leadership either of the committee as a whole, or of Henry Winter Davis as its inspiring genius, since neither could apparently frame a plan to suit itself for a single week—scarcely a single day at a time. But even had there been unity of opinion, the session was too near its end for legislation of this character and gravity, and at the close of the debate the bill and amendments

were laid on the table by a vote of 91 to 64, with 27 not voting. The subject was momentarily revived on the following day, by a substitute for a House bill, reported from the judiciary committee, providing that no insurrectionary State should elect Representatives to Congress until among other conditions "by a law of Congress such State shall have been declared to be entitled to representation in the Congress of the United States." A spirited debate followed, and Mr. Ashley again endeavored to substitute for it his defeated bill of the day before, slightly altered. But the House had had enough of the topic, and once more, by a vote of yeas 80, nays 65, not voting 37, laid the bill and its amendment on the table.

CHAP. XIX.

Feb. 21,
1865."Globe,"
Feb. 22,
1865, p. 997.Ibid.,
p. 1002.

In the Senate the question came up in a somewhat different form. The Legislature of Louisiana had, in October, 1864, elected United States Senators who presented their credentials at the beginning of the session, and their claim was referred to the judiciary committee of the Senate. The chairman of the committee, Lyman Trumbull, appears to have conferred with the President, and, as was natural, to have asked his opinion. Mr. Lincoln wrote him the following reply, on January 9, 1865, which, considering the accusations of dictatorial intentions leveled at him by radical Senators and Representatives of the Wade-Davis type, is most remarkable in its entire omission of any intimation that might even savor of attempted Executive influence on the Legislative Department of the Government:

The paper relating to Louisiana, submitted to the judiciary committee of the Senate by General Banks, is herewith returned. The whole of it is in accordance with

CHAF. XIX. my general impression, and I believe it is true; but much the larger part is beyond my absolute knowledge, as in its nature it must be. All the statements which lie within the range of my knowledge are strictly true; and I think of nothing material which has been omitted.

Even before General Banks went to Louisiana I was anxious for the loyal people there to move for reorganization, and restoration of proper practical relations with the Union; and when he at last expressed his decided conviction that the thing was practicable, I directed him to give his official coöperation to effect it. On the subject, I have sent and received many letters to and from General Banks, and many other persons. These letters, as you remember, were shown to you yesterday, as they will be again, if you desire.

If I shall neither take sides nor argue, will it be out of place for me to make what I think is the true statement of your question as to the proposed Louisiana Senators?

Lincoln to
Trumbull,
Jan. 9, 1865.
MS.

"Can Louisiana be brought into proper practical relations with the Union, sooner, by admitting or by rejecting the proposed Senators?"

"Globe,"
Feb. 23,
1865, p. 1011.

On the 18th of February Senator Trumbull made a report from his committee submitting a joint resolution "that the United States do hereby recognize the Government of the State of Louisiana, inaugurated under and by the Convention which assembled on the 6th day of April, A. D. 1864, at the city of New Orleans, as the legitimate government of said State, entitled to the guarantee and all other rights of a State government, under the Constitution of the United States." He stated that though the facts in the cases of Louisiana and Arkansas were very similar, the committee had thought it more advisable to act upon the case of Louisiana separately, and, if the joint resolution were agreed to, the same course could be applied to any other State.

Though the session was nearing its end, there was an evident desire by nearly all the Republican Senators to pass the resolution; but a violent opposition to the measure on the part of a small minority of them developed itself at the very outset. As the parliamentary custom of the Senate does not embrace the use of the previous question, it was comparatively easy for this minority to postpone debate and action. This opposition was led by Senator Sumner, whom Trumbull openly charged in the Senate with being "in a combination here of a fraction of the Senate to delay the important business of the country, . . . associating himself with those whom he so often denounces for the purpose of calling the yeas and nays and making dilatory motions to postpone the action of this body upon what he says is a very great public measure." Sumner practically admitted the charge, answering, "The question between the Senator from Illinois and myself is simply this: he wishes to pass the measure, and I do not wish to pass it. He thinks the measure innocent; I think it dangerous; and, thinking it dangerous, I am justified in opposing it; and justified, too, in employing all the instruments that I can find in the arsenal of parliamentary warfare." Senator James R. Doolittle further defined the situation by stating, "there are but five who usually act with the Administration who are making and voting for these dilatory motions, and there are eighteen of the friends of the Administration opposed to them." It is scarcely necessary to add that in the pressure of public business then existing this minority of five, at least three of whom—Sumner, Wade, and Chandler—were second to no

CHAP. XIX.

"Globe,"
Feb. 25,
1865, p. 1107.

Ibid.,
p. 1108.

Ibid.,
p. 1109.

CHAP. XIX. one in obstinacy of purpose, were able to defeat the measure. The journal of the Senate shows that on
1865. February 27 the subject, by a vote of 34 to 12, was postponed "to to-morrow"; and its "to-morrow" did not come during the remainder of the session, which closed at noon on the 4th of March, 1865, with Mr. Lincoln's second inauguration.

Though Representatives could be querulous and Senators obstinate the President could be persistent, as he had shown by his treatment of the reconstruction act, and his correspondence with his generals; and continued persistence on his part was plainly justified by the rapidly waning opposition to his views in both Houses of Congress. But new and important events were also daily strengthening his attitude. Since the adjournment of Congress he had visited the army under Grant, witnessed its start on its final campaign, and taken part in the first step of its triumph by his personal visit to the conquered rebel capital. He had barely returned from that visit to his duties at Washington when, on Sunday, the 9th of April, there came to him the culminating news of Lee's surrender. The end of the rebellion was obviously so near that it would soon be necessary to take up the question of reconstruction in a form more practical and more urgent than had yet confronted him. The popular excitement over the victory was such that on Monday, the 10th, crowds gathered before the Executive Mansion several times during the day, and called out the President for speeches. Twice he responded by coming to the window and saying a few words, which, however, indicated that his mind

1865.

was more occupied with work than exuberant rejoicing. As briefly as he could he excused himself, but promised that on the following evening, for which a more formal demonstration was being arranged, he would be prepared to say something.

Accordingly, on Tuesday evening, April 11, Mr. Lincoln made his last public address, reading to his listeners a carefully written paper, which was almost entirely devoted to a discussion of the question of reconstruction as recommended in his various official documents, and as practically tried in the Louisiana experiment. We quote almost the whole of it, as furnishing the shortest and clearest explanation of both his past and future intentions. But these intentions were not destined to be realized. Before the lapse of a week the nation was in sorrow over his death, and the subject and experiment of reconstruction were resumed and carried on under widely different conditions and influences, which it is not the province of this work to bring into comment or comparison. After a few words of joyous congratulation the President said:

“By these recent successes the reinauguration of the National authority—reconstruction—which has had a large share of thought from the first, is pressed much more closely upon our attention. It is fraught with great difficulty. Unlike a case of war between independent nations, there is no authorized organ for us to treat with—no one man has authority to give up the rebellion for any other man. We simply must begin with and mold from disorganized and discordant elements. Nor is it a small additional embarrassment

CHAP. XIX. that we, the loyal people, differ among ourselves as to the mode, manner, and measure of reconstruction. As a general rule, I abstain from reading the reports of attacks upon myself, wishing not to be provoked by that to which I cannot properly offer an answer. In spite of this precaution, however, it comes to my knowledge that I am much censured for some supposed agency in setting up and seeking to sustain the new State government of Louisiana.

“In this I have done just so much as, and no more than, the public knows. In the annual message of December, 1863, and in the accompanying proclamation, I presented a plan of reconstruction, as the phrase goes, which I promised, if adopted by any State, should be acceptable to and sustained by the Executive Government of the nation. I distinctly stated that this was not the only plan which might possibly be acceptable, and I also distinctly protested that the Executive claimed no right to say when or whether Members should be admitted to seats in Congress from such States. This plan was in advance submitted to the then Cabinet, and distinctly approved by every member of it. One of them suggested that I should then and in that connection apply the emancipation proclamation to the theretofore excepted parts of Virginia and Louisiana; that I should drop the suggestion about apprenticeship for freed people, and that I should omit the protest against my own power in regard to the admission of Members to Congress. But even he approved every part and parcel of the plan which has since been employed or touched by the action of Louisiana.

"The new constitution of Louisiana, declaring emancipation for the whole State, practically applies the proclamation to the part previously excepted. It does not adopt apprenticeship for freed people, and it is silent, as it could not well be otherwise, about the admission of Members to Congress. So that, as it applies to Louisiana, every member of the Cabinet fully approved the plan. The message went to Congress, and I received many commendations of the plan, written and verbal, and not a single objection to it from any professed emancipationist came to my knowledge until after the news reached Washington that the people of Louisiana had begun to move in accordance with it. From about July, 1862, I had corresponded with different persons supposed to be interested [in] seeking a reconstruction of a State government for Louisiana. When the message of 1863, with the plan before mentioned, reached New Orleans, General Banks wrote me that he was confident that the people, with his military coöperation, would reconstruct substantially on that plan. I wrote to him and some of them to try it. They tried it, and the result is known. Such only has been my agency in getting up the Louisiana government.

"As to sustaining it, my promise is out, as before stated. But as bad promises are better broken than kept, I shall treat this as a bad promise, and break it whenever I shall be convinced that keeping it is adverse to the public interest; but I have not yet been so convinced. I have been shown a letter on this subject, supposed to be an able one, in which the writer expresses regret that my mind has not seemed to be definitely fixed on the question

CHAP. XIX. whether the seceded States, so called, are in the Union or out of it. It would perhaps add astonishment to his regret were he to learn that since I have found professed Union men endeavoring to make that question I have purposely forbore any public expression upon it. As appears to me, that question has not been nor yet is a practically material one, and that any discussion of it, while it thus remains practically immaterial, could have no effect other than the mischievous one of dividing our friends. As yet, whatever it may hereafter become, that question is bad as the basis of a controversy, and good for nothing at all—a merely pernicious abstraction.

“We all agree that the seceded States, so called, are out of their proper practical relation with the Union, and that the sole object of the Government, civil and military, in regard to those States, is to again get them into that proper practical relation. I believe that it is not only possible, but in fact easier, to do this without deciding or even considering whether these States have ever been out of the Union, than with it. Finding themselves safely at home, it would be utterly immaterial whether they had ever been abroad. Let us all join in doing the acts necessary to restoring the proper practical relations between these States and the Union, and each forever after innocently indulge his own opinion whether in doing the acts he brought the States from without into the Union, or only gave them proper assistance, they never having been out of it. The amount of constituency, so to speak, on which the new Louisiana government rests, would be more satisfactory

to all if it contained 50,000, or 30,000, or even 20,000, instead of only about 12,000, as it does. It is also unsatisfactory to some that the elective franchise is not given to the colored man. I would myself prefer that it were now conferred on the very intelligent, and on those who serve our cause as soldiers. CHAP. XIX.

“Still, the question is not whether the Louisiana government, as it stands, is quite all that is desirable. The question is, will it be wiser to take it as it is and help to improve it, or to reject and disperse it? Can Louisiana be brought into proper practical relation with the Union sooner by sustaining or by discarding her new State government? Some twelve thousand voters in the heretofore slave State of Louisiana have sworn allegiance to the Union, assumed to be the rightful political power of the State, held elections, organized a State government, adopted a free State constitution, giving the benefit of public schools equally to black and white, and empowering the Legislature to confer the elective franchise upon the colored man. Their Legislature has already voted to ratify the constitutional amendment, recently passed by Congress, abolishing slavery throughout the nation. These twelve thousand persons are thus fully committed to the Union and to perpetual freedom in the State—committed to the very things, and nearly all the things, the nation wants—and they ask the nation’s recognition and its assistance to make good their committal.

“Now, if we reject and spurn them, we do our utmost to disorganize and disperse them. We, in effect, say to the white man: You are worthless or worse; we will neither help you, nor be helped by

CHAP. XIX. you. To the blacks we say: This cup of liberty which these, your old masters, hold to your lips we will dash from you, and leave you to the chances of gathering the spilled and scattered contents in some vague and undefined when, where, and how. If this course, discouraging and paralyzing both white and black, has any tendency to bring Louisiana into proper practical relations with the Union, I have so far been unable to perceive it. If, on the contrary, we recognize and sustain the new government of Louisiana, the converse of all this is made true. We encourage the hearts and nerve the arms of the twelve thousand to adhere to their work, and argue for it, and proselyte for it, and fight for it, and feed it, and grow it, and ripen it to a complete success. The colored man, too, in seeing all united for him, is inspired with vigilance and energy and daring to the same end. Grant that he desires the elective franchise, will he not attain it sooner by saving the already advanced steps towards it than by running backward over them? Concede that the new government of Louisiana is only to what it should be as the egg is to the fowl, we shall sooner have the fowl by hatching the egg than by smashing it.

"Again, if we reject Louisiana, we also reject one vote in favor of the proposed amendment to the national Constitution. To meet this proposition it has been argued that no more than three-fourths of those States which have not attempted secession are necessary to validly ratify the amendment. I do not commit myself against this further than to say that such a ratification would be questionable, and sure to be persistently ques-

tioned, while a ratification by three-fourths of all the States would be unquestioned and unquestionable. I repeat the question: Can Louisiana be brought into proper practical relation with the Union sooner by sustaining or by discarding her new State government? What has been said of Louisiana will apply generally to other States. And yet so great peculiarities pertain to each State, and such important and sudden changes occur in the same State, and withal so new and unprecedented is the whole case that no exclusive and inflexible plan can safely be prescribed as to details and collaterals. Such exclusive and inflexible plan would surely become a new entanglement. Important principles may and must be inflexible. In the present situation, as the phrase goes, it may be my duty to make some new announcement to the people of the South. I am considering, and shall not fail to act when satisfied that action will be proper."

Corrected
by MS.

CHAPTER XX

THE MARCH TO THE SEA

CHAP. XX.

Sherman to
Grant,
Sept. 6, 1864.
Report
Committee
on Conduct
of the War,
1865-66.
Supple-
ment,
Vol. I.,
p. 192.

Sherman to
Stanton,
Sept. 6.
Ibid.

SHERMAN saw that it was not worth while to attack Hood's intrenchments, at Lovejoy's Station. He said to Halleck on the 4th of September, "The enemy hold a line facing us, with front well covered by parapets" — and both flanks protected by streams of water. The position was too strong to attack in front and to turn it he thought would carry him too far from his base. He was not at that moment prepared for a long journey, and concluded to go back to Atlanta to give his army the rest it had so nobly earned, and himself a little time for reflection as to his next move. He marched back with great deliberation, "feeding high on the cornfields of the Confederacy." There was a certain ostentation in his leisure. He wanted to show the enemy that he was not in a hurry. He burned some cotton on the way, but saved enough, he says, to pay the expenses of the National salute. The salutes were all fired, and the National rejoicings were over, before, on the 8th of September, he rode into the city which was the magnificent prize of his summer's work. He immediately put into execution a plan he had already formed of converting the ruined city into a



GENERAL JOHN M. CORSE.

military post. Before leaving Lovejoy's he had informed Halleck that he intended to move all the inhabitants of Atlanta, sending those committed to the Union cause to the rear, and the rebel families to the front. He foresaw the passionate criticism which this action would provoke and was prepared for it. "If the people," he said, "raise a howl against my barbarity and cruelty, I will answer that war is war, and not popularity seeking. If they want peace, they and their relatives must stop the war."

CHAP. XX.

Sept. 4, 1864.

Sherman,
"Memoirs,"
Vol. II.,
p. 111.

On arriving at Atlanta he at once announced this intention to the local and municipal authorities. He had already notified his purpose to General Hood and proposed to him a truce in the neighborhood of Rough-and-Ready, where each side could send an officer with a small guard to maintain order and oversee the deportation of the citizens with their effects. Hood accepted this proposition, saying he would render all assistance in his power to expedite the transportation of citizens south. He could not close his letter, however, without remarking "that the unprecedented measure you propose transcends, in studied and ingenious cruelty, all acts ever before brought to my attention in the dark history of war"; from which it would seem either that General Hood was a very reckless writer, or that his historical reading had been limited. Sherman replied in his usual spirited fashion, showing that such acts were by no means unprecedented, even in the recent history of the Confederate army, and then administered a sincere and searching sermon to General Hood in regard to the crime of rebellion and treason against

Sept. 9, 1864.

Sherman,
"Memoirs,"
Vol. II.,
p. 119.

CHAP. XX. the Government, and counseled him to drop his
 Sept., 1864. "hypocritical appeals to God and humanity" and
 "if we must be enemies let us be men and fight it
 out. . . God will judge us in due time," he said,
 "and he will pronounce whether it be more humane
 to fight with a town full of women and the families
 of a brave people at our back, or to remove them
 Sherman, in time to places of safety among their own friends
 "Memoirs," and people."
 Vol. II.,
 p. 120.

Ibid., p. 124. General Hood answered in a long letter full
 of florid declamation, and concluded by expressing
 his personal preference to "die a thousand deaths
 than submit to live under you or your Govern-
 ment and your negro allies"—though in the sequel
 he did all this before dying the one death which is
 allotted to men. The mayor and council of Atlanta
 also protested against the measures adopted by
 Sherman. To them he replied with equal firm-
 ness but in a tone of far greater kindness. "The
 use of Atlanta," he said, "for warlike purposes
 is inconsistent with its character as a home for
 families. There will be no manufactures, com-
 merce, or agriculture here, for the maintenance
 of families, and sooner or later want will compel
 the inhabitants to go. Why not go now when
 all the arrangements are completed for the trans-
 fer, instead of waiting till the plunging shot of
 contending armies will renew the scenes of the
 past month?" He could not give, either to Hood
 or the citizens, the real reason for his action, which
 was that the Confederate works about Atlanta were
 so extensive that they would require an army of
 thirty thousand to guard them. He had resolved to
 build a compact inner line which could be held by

Ibid., p. 126.

one-fifth that number, and he thought the removal of the citizens, independent of the question of supplying their wants in time of active operations, was a military necessity.

This action of Sherman was approved by the War Department. Halleck wrote on the 28th of September: "Not only are you justified by the laws and usages of war in removing these people, but I think it was your duty to your own army to do so. . . We certainly are not required to treat the so-called non-combatant rebels better than they themselves treat each other. Even here in Virginia, within fifty miles of Washington, they strip their own families of provisions, leaving them, as our army advances, to be fed by us or to starve within our lines." Sherman also arranged with Hood an exchange of two thousand prisoners from those captured at Jonesboro, and the business connected with this exchange and the deportation of the citizens was satisfactorily transacted at Rough-and-Ready, the Confederate officers and men harmonizing perfectly with their courteous adversaries, and parting good friends. Hood continued his solemn admonitions to Sherman in regard to the laws of God and the laws of nations, and Sherman dryly answered, "I think I understand the laws of civilized nations, and the 'customs of war,' but if at a loss at any time I know where to seek for information to refresh my memory."

Sherman had no idea of spending the winter or even the autumn in Atlanta. Even while he was watching the intrenchments of Hood at Lovejoy's his mind was already full of his next move. He telegraphed to Halleck asking for his share of the

CHAP. XX.

Sherman to
Halleck,
Sept. 13,
1864.
Report
Committee
on Conduct
of the War,
1865-66.
Supple-
ment,
Vol. I.,
p. 196.

Sherman,
"Memoirs."
Vol. II.,
p. 128.

Report
Committee
on Conduct
of the War,
1865-66.
Supple-
ment,
Vol. I.,
p. 196.

CHAP. XX. proceeds of the pending draft and suggesting a campaign in coöperation with Canby in Alabama.

Sept. 9, 1864. A few days later he told him that he would have Atlanta a pure Gibraltar by the 1st of October. On the 10th of September he wrote to General Canby, "I will be ready to sally forth again in October, but ought to have some assurance that in case of necessity I can swing into Appalachicola or Montgomery and find friends." On the same day Grant was telegraphing to Sherman to give the enemy no peace while the war lasted. "Now that we have all of Mobile Bay that is valuable I do not know but it will be the best move for Major-General Canby's troops to act upon Savannah whilst you move on Augusta. I should like to hear from you, however, on this matter"; and Sherman at once replied, "If you can manage to take the Savannah river as high as Augusta, or the Chatahoochee as far up as Columbus, I can sweep the whole State of Georgia; otherwise I would risk our whole army by going too far from Atlanta"; and in all of his letters and dispatches of this month the control of the Savannah River is assumed by him as a condition precedent to his march to the seacoast.

Ibid.

Ibid.

Report
Committee
on Conduct
of the War,
1865-66.
Supple-
ment,
Vol. I.,
p. 198.

All this while Wheeler's cavalry was busy in his rear, and Forrest held a threatening attitude in Middle Tennessee; but Sherman paid little attention to them and none at all for the moment to Hood. On the 19th of September he telegraphed to Grant, "I can quickly bounce him out of Lovejoy's, but think him better there, where I can watch him, than further off." Finally, on the 20th of September, Colonel Porter having visited him di-

CHAP. XX.

rectly from Grant, and having given him the latest tidings and views which Grant could send, Sherman wrote a careful letter to the General-in-Chief, discussing the entire situation, and concluded by saying, "The more I study the game the more am I convinced that it would be wrong for me to penetrate much further into Georgia without an objective beyond. It would not be productive of much good. I can start east and make a circuit south and back, doing vast damage to the State, but resulting in no permanent good; but by mere threatening to do so, I hold a rod over the Georgians, who are not over loyal to the South." He, therefore, gives it as his opinion that Grant's army and Canby's should be reënforced to the maximum; that after the capture of Wilmington Grant should strike for Savannah; that Canby should send a force to Columbus, Georgia; that he himself should keep Hood employed and put his army in fine order for a march on Columbus, Augusta, and Charleston; and be ready as soon as Wilmington is sealed to commerce and the city of Savannah in the possession of the National armies.

Report
Committee
on Conduct
of the War,
1865-66.
Supple-
ment,
Vol. I.,
p. 200.

Before Sherman had been a week in Atlanta two prominent Georgians named Hill and Nelson came through the lines to his headquarters, representing themselves as having been friends in Congress of the general's brother, John Sherman. Mr. Hill's explanation of his visit was that he was in quest of the body of his son who had been killed in battle. They were kindly received and invited to dinner by the general and, as was inevitable with so genial a host and so good a talker, there was a great deal of unrestrained conversation. The

CHAP. XX. Southerners admitted their belief that further resistance was madness and suggested the possibility of State action being initiated by Governor Joseph E. Brown to withdraw Georgia from the Confederacy. Through these gentlemen and through Mr. Wright and Mr. King, also men of prominence in the State, Sherman sent messages to Governor Brown offering, if he would issue his proclamation withdrawing his State troops from the army of the Confederacy, that Sherman would, instead of devastating the land as he went forward, keep his men to the high roads and commons and pay for the corn and meat which he needed and should take. He also authorized the visitors to invite Governor Brown to visit Atlanta; he would give him a safeguard, and if he wanted to make a speech he would guarantee him as full and respectable an audience as any he had ever spoken to. On the 15th of September Sherman telegraphed Halleck that Governor Brown had disbanded his militia to gather the corn and sorghum of the State. "I have reason to believe that he and Stephens want to visit me and have sent them a hearty invitation."¹ This telegram being shown

1864.

Sherman,
"Memoirs."
Vol. II.,
p. 138.

1864.

Sherman,
"Memoirs."
Vol. II.,
p. 139.

¹ Governor Joseph E. Brown, by a letter of the 10th of September, sent the following notification to General Hood: "As the militia of the State were called out for the defense of Atlanta during the campaign against it, which has terminated by the fall of the city into the hands of the enemy, and as many of these left their homes without preparation (expecting to be gone but a few weeks) who have remained in service over three months (most of the time in the trenches), justice requires that they be permitted, while the enemy are preparing for the winter campaign, to return to their homes, and look for a time after important interests and prepare themselves for such service as may be required when another campaign commences against other important points in the State. I, therefore, hereby withdraw said organization from your command."

to President Lincoln was, of course, read with the liveliest concern, and he at once telegraphed to Sherman, "I feel great interest in the subjects of your dispatch mentioning corn and sorghum and the contemplated visit to you." Sherman replied, giving the details of the negotiations he had initiated with Governor Brown, saying, "I am fully conscious of the delicate nature of such assertions, but it would be a magnificent stroke of policy if we could, without surrendering principle or a foot of ground, arouse the latent enmity of Georgia against Davis." Sherman had no doubt at the time that Brown seriously entertained his proposition; but he took no action further than that of withdrawing the State troops from Hood's army.

He wrote a long letter to William King, filled with words to no purpose breathing defiance towards the Government of the United States and an almost equal contumacy towards that of Richmond, but holding out no hope of separate negotiations. A. H. Stephens wrote more briefly, saying that the lack, on both sides, of authority to treat, would preclude any conference between himself and General Sherman.

Hood, on the 3d of September, had telegraphed to Jefferson Davis representing his pressing need of reënforcements. Mr. Davis answered that no resources for that purpose were at hand. Hood thereupon decided to begin operations, at the earliest moment possible, in rear of Sherman. He had found that his troops were so disheartened that he dared not trust them in direct conflict with Sherman's victorious army. He telegraphed to Richmond on the 6th of September asking that the prisoners at

CHAP. XX.

Lincoln to
Sherman,
Sept. 17,
1864.
Sherman,
"Memoirs,"
p. 139.

Ibid.

"Annual
Cyclo-
pædia,"
1864,
pp. 405, 406.

Hood,
'Advance
and
Retreat,"
p. 245.

1864.

CHAP. XX.

Hood,
"Advance
and
Retreat,"
p. 248.

Ibid., p. 249.

Sept., 1864.

Andersonville should be so disposed of that his army might be free to move where he thought best. He continued, in his bewildered way, "According to all human calculations we should have saved Atlanta had the officers and men of the army done what was expected of them. It has been God's will for it to be otherwise." Feeling, however, the necessity of blaming some of the human instrumentalities, he asked that General Hardee should be removed from duty under him. In response to an urgent invitation from Hood, Mr. Davis himself resolved to visit the Confederate army in Georgia, and he arrived on the 25th at Palmetto where Hood had by this time encamped, being the first stage of his progress in his movement to Sherman's rear. The next morning the Confederate general and President rode to the front to review the troops, and Hood was subjected to the unspeakable humiliation of hearing brigade after brigade welcoming the Executive with the shout, "Give us General Johnston." In the evening Mr. Davis was serenaded and the usual florid and defiant speeches were made by himself, by Howell Cobb, and by Isham G. Harris, Governor of Tennessee *in partibus*.

The next day was devoted to the discussion of Hood's plan and the reorganization of his army. The question of the removal of Hardee from the command gave Mr. Davis considerable embarrassment. He had known him too long and well to share Hood's prejudice against him, and had probably by this time learned that he had overrated Hood's own capacity. He solved the difficulty finally by giving Hardee command of the Department of South Carolina and Florida, which was

nominally a promotion, and by placing Beauregard over Hood in the command both of his department and of that of General Richard Taylor. He apparently made no objection to Hood's scheme of cutting Sherman's communications, selecting a position on or near the Alabama line, in proximity to the Blue Mountain Railroad, and there giving him battle. Hood urged that an offensive movement would improve the *morale* of his army to a degree that would render it equal to fighting the enemy, but that at the moment it was totally unfit for pitched battle, and that the plan in question offered the sole chance to avert disaster.

CHAP. XX.

Hood,
'Advance
and
'Retreat,'
p. 254.

The supersession of Hood by Beauregard involved at first no modification of his plans, and he at once pushed forward to strike the railroad in Sherman's rear. Sherman became aware of his plan shortly after its execution had begun. He told Halleck, on the 25th of September, that Hood seemed to be moving to the Alabama line; an announcement which drew from Grant the query whether it would not be impossible for Hood to subsist his army on that line. Sherman put a strong garrison in Chattanooga and one in Rome, and with much reluctance, for he was anxious to start on his Southern enterprise, moved north of the Chattahoochee himself with a great portion of his army to see if he could bring Hood to battle. Hood, marching in light order, moved his force with expedition to the railroad, which Stewart's corps struck at Big Shanty and at Ackworth, destroying several miles of the road. A division under General S. G. French was sent to capture Allatoona, at which important post there were

1864.

Grant to
Sherman,
Sept. 26.
Sherman,
'Memoirs,'
Vol. II.,
p. 141.

CHAP. XX. stored some three million rations. Sherman had sufficient notice of this intention to order General John M. Corse from Rome to Allatoona. His timely arrival increased the garrison to nearly two thousand men. French arrived before the place at daybreak on the 5th of October, and after a furious cannonade demanded its surrender, to which Corse made the plucky reply which might have been expected from his character.

1864.

One of the most stubborn engagements of the war now took place between the Confederate division outside and the little garrison. All the commanding officers were badly wounded. Lieut.-Colonel James Redfield was killed; Lieut.-Colonel J. E. Tourtellotte and Colonel Richard Rowett fell with disabling wounds; Corse was knocked senseless for nearly an hour by a rifle bullet in the face, but rallied and conducted the defense the rest of the day. Sherman, from the crest of Kenesaw, eighteen miles away, conversed by means of signal flags with the gallant defenders of the fort, and received from Corse, at two o'clock, the famous dispatch, over whose profanity it is doubtful whether the recording angel wept or smiled, "I am short a cheek-bone and one ear, but am able to whip all hell yet." Whether the powers of darkness did or did not recognize the uselessness of attempting to conquer such men, General French at least came to the conclusion that they were more than he could manage, and at three o'clock retired. Lieutenant McKensie, commanding the signal squad, himself signaled the news to Sherman that the attack had failed, amid the whistling of a storm of bullets fired at him by the sharpshooters in the Confederate rear.

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of the War,
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ment,
Vol. I.,
p. 218.

In spite of this check, however, Hood was so elated by his rapid progress and his work on the railroad that he decided to move further north and again strike the road between Resaca and Tunnel Hill, to destroy it thoroughly, and then move in the direction of the Tennessee. He imagined in this way he might entice Sherman as near the Tennessee line as possible, and there turn upon him and defeat him. He therefore marched through Dallas to Coosaville, crossed the Coosa River on the 11th of October, and marched upon Resaca and Dalton. Sherman, who always found it difficult to comprehend the eccentric movements and to deduce from them the intentions of Hood, was more annoyed than disturbed by this manoeuvre. He telegraphed Grant on the 9th of October: "It will be a physical impossibility to protect the roads now that Hood, Forrest, Wheeler, and the whole batch of devils are turned loose, without home or habitation"; and proposed to break up the railroad from Chattanooga and start out with wagons for his Southern trip. "Until we can repopulate Georgia," he said, "it is useless for us to occupy it; but the utter destruction of its roads, houses, and people will cripple their military resources. . . I can make this march and make Georgia howl!"

He took, however, the most energetic means to find Hood, and, if possible, to fight him, but could not effect this purpose. S. D. Lee, with his corps, moved on Resaca, and in Hood's name demanded its surrender, adding, "If the place is carried by assault no prisoners will be taken." This barbarous threat, however, did not intimidate the garrison and its commander, Colonel Clark R. Wever,

CHAP. XX.

Hood,
"Advance
and
Retreat,"
p. 258.

1864.

Sherman,
"Memoirs."
Vol. II.,
p. 152.

Oct. 12, 1864.

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"Advance
and
Retreat,"
p. 266.

Oct. 16,
1864.
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of the War,
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ment,
Vol. I.,
p. 230.

Sherman
to Thomas,
Oct. 17,
1864.
Ibid., p. 232.

and Lee, failing to take the place, was not put to the painful necessity of slaughtering its defenders. On the 13th, Hood in person demanded and received the surrender of Dalton. He then quickly retired from the railroad, and, moving towards Villanow, he passed through the gaps in the mountains, and halted for two days at the Cross Roads in a beautiful valley nine miles south of Lafayette. He says it was his intention there to select a position and deliver battle, but, upon consulting his officers, the opinion was unanimous that his army was not in condition to risk a fight. He passed a day in deep doubt and perplexity, and at last resolved to march into Tennessee. Sherman desired nothing better than this. At the very moment that Hood says he conceived this resolution, Sherman was telegraphing to Schofield: "I want the first positive fact that Hood contemplates an invasion of Tennessee. Invite him to do so. Send him a free pass in." Hood moved to Gadsden on the 20th of October, at which point Beauregard joined him, and gave his approval to the proposed Tennessee campaign.

Sherman thought it useless to follow him. It was hard to make him believe that Hood really dared to go into Tennessee. He thought so ill of his adversary's capacity that he was sure that General Thomas, who was at Nashville, with the small and imperfectly equipped force then at his disposal, could handle Hood and his army, while Sherman marched southward. He made no pursuit of Hood after he started westward, but devoted himself at once to preparations for his march to the sea. "This movement," he said to Halleck,

October 19th, "is not purely military or strategic; but it will illustrate the vulnerability of the South. They don't know what war means; but when the rich planters of the Oconee and Savannah see their fences and corn, and hogs and sheep, vanish before their eyes, they will have something more than a mean opinion of the 'Yanks.' Even now our poor mules laugh at the fine corn-fields, and our soldiers riot on chestnuts, sweet potatoes, pigs, and chickens."

On the next day he sent Thomas full orders as to the general plan of action for the rest of the season; "to pursue Hood is folly," he said, "for he can twist and turn like a fox and wear out any army in pursuit; to continue to occupy long lines of railroads simply exposes our small detachments to be picked up in detail, and forces me to make counter-marches to protect lines of communication." He therefore proposed to take General Howard and his army, Schofield and his, and two corps of Thomas's, for the southern trip, leaving Thomas only the Fourth Corps under Stanley; though afterwards, when Hood's intentions were more fully developed, he also sent Schofield with the Twenty-third Corps to Thomas. Serious as the movement of Hood and Beauregard appeared in the latter part of October it never shook Sherman's serenity. Even while the railroad was broken behind him, he enjoyed the comfort and plenty which came with his perfect system of foraging on the enemy, among the "corn and potatoes," which "cost nothing a bushel." "If Georgia," he said, "can afford to break our railroad, she can afford to feed us. Please preach this

CHAP. XX.

1864.

Report
Committee
on Conduct
of the War,
1865-66.
Supple-
ment,
Vol. I.,
p. 236.

Ibid.

1864.

Sherman to
Slocum,
Oct. 23,
1864.
Report
Committee
on Conduct
of the War.
Supple-
ment,
Vol. I.,
p. 239.

CHAP. XX. doctrine to men who go forth and are likely to spread it."

1864.

Sherman,
"Memoirs,"
Vol. II.,
p. 164.

Ibid.,
pp. 165, 166.

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Committee
on Conduct
of the War,
1865-66.
Supple-
ment,
Vol. I.,
p. 256.

Nov., 1864.

Grant, however, was not so entirely at his ease in regard to Hood. On the 1st of November he asked Sherman, "Do you not think it advisable, now that Hood has gone so far north, to entirely ruin him before starting on your proposed campaign? With Hood's army destroyed, you can go where you please with impunity. I believed, and still believe, if you had started south while Hood was in the neighborhood of you, he would have been forced to go after you. Now that he is far away he might look upon the chase as useless, and he will go in one direction while you are pushing in the other. If you can see a chance of destroying Hood's army attend to that first, and make your other move secondary." Sherman replied, giving it as his opinion that if he turned against Hood with his whole force he would retreat to the southwest and insisted that he regarded the pursuit of Hood as useless. "If I turn back," he continued in a second dispatch, "the whole effect of my campaign will be lost." Grant next day assented to this view and said, "Go on as you propose."

On the 3d of November Sherman reported to Halleck the situation of affairs announcing his settled intention to move forward as soon as he could send back all rubbish to the rear and get forward the necessary supplies with which to start; advised coöperative movements from Thomas's and Canby's front which, he said, would completely bewilder Beauregard and make him "burst with French despair." On the 6th he issued orders to

CHAP. XX.

all commanding officers of forts directing preparations to go forward with as much speed as possible, but intimated that time would be allowed in present camps for the complete payment of all troops, the sending home of the soldiers' money, and the voting of the soldiers in their camp for President. He found time on the same day to write a long letter to Grant explaining and justifying his conduct in the October movement, expressing his confidence that with Stanley and Schofield Thomas would be able to take care of Hood, and enlarging upon the vast moral benefit to be derived from the contemplated march. "If we can march a well-appointed army right through his territory it is a demonstration to the world, foreign and domestic, that we have a power which Davis cannot resist. . . There are thousands of people abroad and in the South who will reason thus: If the North can march an army right through the South it is proof positive that the North can prevail in this contest. . . . Mr. Lincoln's election, which is assured, coupled with the conclusion thus reached, makes a complete logical whole." He then discusses the three routes open to him, decides in favor of that having its terminus at Charleston or Savannah, but leaves himself open to adopt either alternative.

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on Conduct
of the War,
1865-66,
Supple-
ment,
Vol. I.,
p. 261.

All preparations being completed he caused the foundries, mills, and shops of every kind in Rome to be destroyed on the 10th of November. The next day he telegraphed to Halleck, "All appearances still indicate that Beauregard has got back to his old hole at Corinth and I hope he will enjoy it. My army prefers to enjoy the fresh sweet-potato fields of the Ocmulgee." He started on the

1864.

Ibid., p. 264.

CHAP. XX. 12th with his full staff from Kingston to Atlanta.
 NOV., 1864. Resting at noon, his telegraphic operator, with a small pocket instrument which he held in his lap, called the Chattanooga office, and received this last message from General Thomas. The "Rock of Chickamauga" had not been especially pleased with his assignment to defend Tennessee, but he accepted it as he did every duty ever confided him with modest confidence and devotion. "I have no fears," he said, "that Beauregard can do us any harm now, and if he attempts to follow you I will follow him as far as possible. If he does not follow you, I will then thoroughly organize my troops and, I believe, shall have men enough to ruin him unless he gets out of the way very rapidly. . . I am now convinced that the greater part of Beauregard's army is near Florence and Tuscumbia and that you will at least have a clear road before you for several days, and that your success will fully equal your expectations." Sherman began to reply, "Dispatch received. All right," and at that instant the wires were cut and communications ceased. As Sherman rode towards Atlanta that night he met railroad trains going to the rear with furious speed. He was profoundly impressed with the strange aspect of affairs: two hostile armies marching in opposite directions, each in the full belief that it was achieving a final and conclusive result in the great war. "I was strongly inspired," he writes, "with a feeling that the movement on our part was a direct attack upon the rebel army and the rebel capital at Richmond, though a full thousand miles of hostile country intervened; and that for better or worse it would end the war." The re-

Report
 Committee
 on Conduct
 of the War,
 1865-66,
 Supplement,
 Vol. I.,
 p. 287.

Sherman,
 "Memoirs,"
 Vol. II.,
 p. 170.



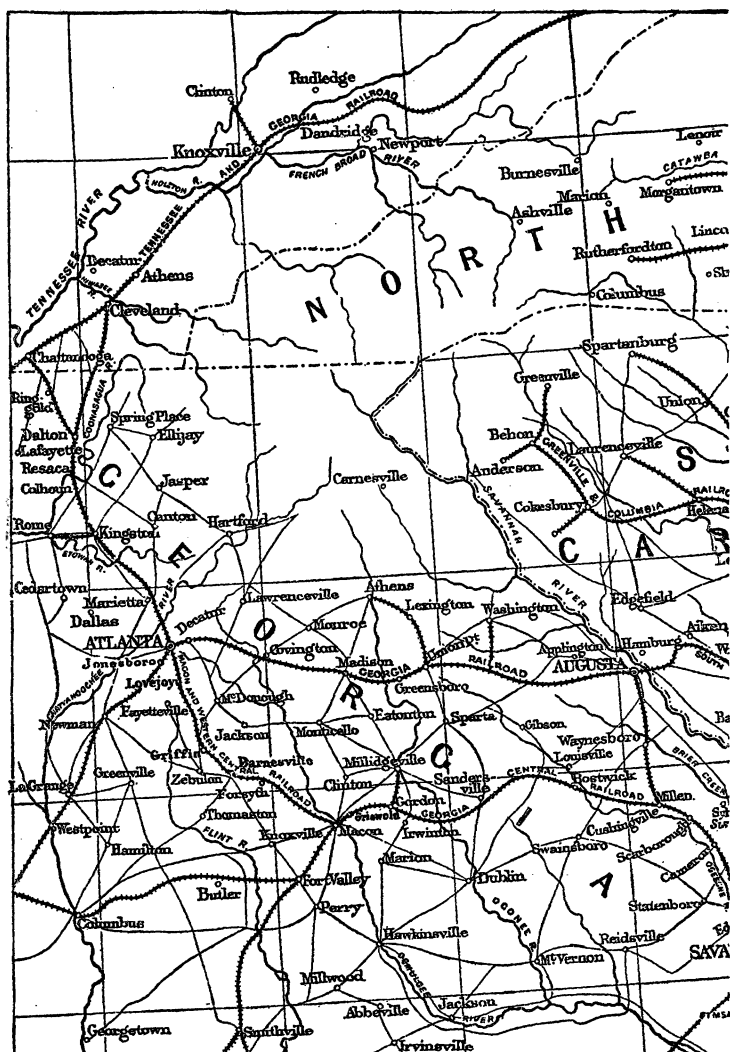
GENERAL JUDSON KILPATRICK.

sult was a magnificent vindication of this soldierly intuition. CHAP. XX.

His army consisted in round numbers of sixty thousand men, the most perfect in strength, health, and intelligence that ever went to war. He had thoroughly purged it of all inefficient material, sending to the rear all organizations and even all individuals that he thought would be a drag upon his celerity or strength. His right wing, under Howard, consisted of the Fifteenth Corps,¹ commanded by Osterhaus, in the absence of John A. Logan; and the Seventeenth Corps, commanded by Frank P. Blair, Jr. The left wing, commanded by Slocum, comprised the Fourteenth Corps under Jeff. C. Davis, and the Twentieth Corps under A. S. Williams. In his general orders he had not intimated to the army the object of their march. "It is sufficient for you to know," he said, "that it involves a departure from our present base and a long, difficult march to a new one." Nov. 8, 1864. His special field orders are a model of clearness and conciseness.

The habitual order of march was to be, wherever practicable, by four roads as nearly parallel as possible, and converging at points to be indicated from time to time. There was to be no general

¹ There were four divisions of Morgan, and Absalom Baird; the Fifteenth Corps commanded by Brigadier-Generals C. R. Woods, W. B. Hazen, John E. Smith, and John M. Corse. There were three divisions in the Seventeenth Corps, commanded by Major-General J. A. Mower and Brigadier-Generals M. D. Leggett and Giles A. Smith. There were three divisions in the Fourteenth Corps, commanded by Brigadier-Generals W. P. Carlin, James D. Morgan, and Absalom Baird; three in the Twentieth Corps, under Brigadier-Generals N. J. Jackson, J. W. Geary, and W. T. Ward. General Sherman held the cavalry division separate, subject to his own orders. It was commanded by General Judson Kilpatrick, and was composed of two brigades under Colonel E. H. Murray of Kentucky and Colonel Smith D. Atkins of Illinois.



FROM GENERAL BADEAU'S "MILITARY HISTORY OF ULYSSES S. GRANT." D. APPLETON & CO.



CHAP. XX. train of supplies; behind each regiment should follow one wagon and one ambulance; a due proportion of wagons for ammunition and provision behind each brigade; the separate columns were to start at seven in the morning and make about fifteen miles a day. The army was to subsist liberally on the country; forage parties, under the command of discreet officers, were to gather near the routes traveled whatever was needed by the command, aiming to keep in the wagons a reserve of at least ten days' provisions; soldiers were strictly forbidden to enter dwellings of inhabitants or commit trespasses; the power to destroy mills, houses, cotton gins, etc., was intrusted to corps commanders alone. No destruction of property was to be permitted in districts where the army was unmolested; but relentless devastation was ordered in case of the manifestation of local hostility by the shooting of soldiers or the burning of bridges. The cavalry were ordered to appropriate, freely, horses, mules, and wagons from the country passed through. It was strictly enjoined that the negroes should not be encouraged to follow the army, and that none but a certain proportion of able-bodied young men, whose services were needed, should be allowed to follow.

1864. Precisely at seven o'clock on the morning of the 16th of November the great army started on its march. A band struck up the anthem of "John Brown's body lies a-moldering in the grave"; the soldiers caught up the refrain, and, to the swelling chorus of "Glory, Hallelujah," the great march was begun. The month that followed will always remain to those sixty thousand men the most

romantic and inspiring memory of their lives. The weather was favorable all the way; to veterans the marches were of reasonable length; the work of destroying the Southern railroads was so easy to their experienced hands that it hardly delayed the day's march. With the exception of the affair on the 22d of November, when P. J. Phillips with a division of Smith's Georgia troops attacked C. C. Walcutt's Brigade, which was marching as the rear-guard of the right wing at Griswoldville, and met with a severe repulse, and a series of cavalry fights between Wheeler and Kilpatrick near Waynesboro', there was no fighting to do between Atlanta and Savannah. A swarm of militia and irregular cavalry hung, it is true, about the front and flank of the marching army, but were hardly a source of more annoyance than so many mosquitoes would have been. The foragers brought in every evening their heterogeneous supplies from the outlying plantations, and although they had to defend themselves every day from scattered forces of the enemy, the casualties which they reported each evening were insignificant. The utmost efforts of Sherman and his officers to induce the negroes to remain quietly at home were not entirely successful. The promise of freedom which was to come to them from the victory of the Union cause was too vague and indefinite to content them. When they saw this vast army moving by before their cabins, with flaunting banners, which were to them the visible sign and symbol of emancipation, in spite of every effort made to drive them away, the simple-hearted freedmen gathered in an ever-increasing cloud in rear of the army; and when the campaign was over

CHAP. XX. they peopled the sea-islands of Georgia and furnished, after the war, the principal employment of the Freedmen's Commission.

The march produced an extraordinary effervescence throughout the Confederacy. If words could avail anything against heavy battalions, Sherman would have been annihilated in his first day's march. Beauregard fulminated his proclamations, filled with lurid Creole rhetoric, to the people of Georgia, calling them to rally around their "patriotic Governor" — an adjective which hardly agreed with Jefferson Davis's recent characterization of Governor Brown. He called on them to obstruct and destroy all the roads in Sherman's front, flank, and rear, promising that his army should soon starve in their midst. From Richmond the same vehement proclamations were rained upon Georgia. The people were assured that President Davis and the Secretary of War had done and were still doing all that could be done to meet the emergency. "Let every man fly to arms!" shouted the Georgia members of Congress. "Remove your negroes, horses, cattle, and provisions from Sherman's army, and burn what you cannot carry. . . . Assail the invader in front, flank, and rear, by night and by day. Let him have no rest."

Sherman,
"Memoirs,"
Vol. II.,
pp. 189, 190.

As Sherman drew near to Milledgeville on the 23d of November the Georgia Legislature passed an act to levy the population *en masse*; but this act of desperate legislation had no effect in checking the march of the "Yankees," and the Governor, State officers, and Legislature fled in the utmost confusion as Sherman entered the place. The Union general occupied the Execu-

tive Mansion for a day; some of the soldiers went to the State House, organized themselves into a constituent assembly, and after a spirited mock-serious debate, repealed the ordinance of secession. Sherman took the greatest possible pains to prevent any damage to the city and marched out on the 24th on the way to Millen. He ordered his force of cavalry in the direction of Augusta, but pushed steadily forward with his main body, and on the 3d of December entered Millen with Blair's corps and paused there a day to bring the army together. Finding it impossible to stop him, the Georgia State troops by sharp marching had made their way directly to the vicinity of Savannah, where Sherman himself arrived and invested the city from the Savannah to the little Ogeechee River, on the 10th of December.

CHAP. XX.

Nov., 1864.

General Hardee had found it impossible to hold his outer line of works. He destroyed the Charleston and Savannah Railroad bridge over the Savannah River and withdrew to his inner line. He had had in the last days of November a piece of singular good fortune. The Georgia militia under General G. W. Smith had arrived at Grahamsville on the Charleston Railroad exactly at the proper time to repulse an attack of a division of National troops under General John P. Hatch, which had been sent by General J. G. Foster to occupy that important road in the rear of Hardee. Several spirited assaults were made by Hatch's troops, but they were all unsuccessful; so that this inestimable route of retreat by way of the Union causeway and the Charleston road, was saved to Hardee. He had no confidence in his ability to hold Savannah permanently

CHAP. XX. against Sherman. He and Richard Taylor, who had hurried across the Confederacy from the west to join him, agreed that Hardee ought to be ready to abandon Savannah before it could be thoroughly invested. It was of the utmost importance that his army and the garrison of Charleston should be saved and united to oppose the northward march of Sherman after Savannah should be taken, and the repulse of Hatch made this most desirable consummation entirely practicable. The Union causeway was so protected by inundated rice fields that it was impossible, or at least exceedingly difficult, for Sherman to close this avenue of retreat without making a large detachment from his army and a long detour to the north.

Sherman,
"Memoirs,"
Vol. II.,
p. 195.

But the first necessity of the situation to Sherman was to establish his communications with the sea. Howard had sent an intelligent scout, Captain William Duncan, down the Ogeechee in a canoe, but had heard no report as to his success in communicating with the fleet. The way to the sea was barred by a formidable work called Fort McAllister, on the south side of the Ogeechee River. Sherman determined to reduce this work by assault, and assigned for the purpose his own favorite division of the Fifteenth Corps, the same which he had commanded at Shiloh and Vicksburg. His engineers, to whom nothing now seemed difficult, speedily built a bridge over the river, and at sunrise Hazen's division passed over with orders to march rapidly down the right bank of the Ogeechee and to assault and carry the fort by storm. Sherman reasoned that the strongest side of the work would be that which was constructed to resist an

attack by sea, and that the gorge would be comparatively weak. Hazen, however, found so many and such formidable obstacles in his way, that it was five o'clock in the afternoon before he was ready for the assault. Sherman waited with intense anxiety, on a signal station, in full sight of the work; finally he received from Hazen a signal message that he was ready, and at that moment a small steamer approached from the sea whose officers inquired by signal whether Fort McAllister was taken. Sherman answered, "Not yet; but it will be in a minute." Never was a promise more promptly and perfectly kept. "At that instant," as Sherman says, "we saw Hazen's troops come out of the dark fringe of woods that encompassed the fort, the lines dressed as on parade, with colors flying, and moving forward with a quick, steady pace. Fort McAllister was then all alive, its big guns belching forth dense clouds of smoke, which soon enveloped our assaulting lines. One color went down, but was up in a moment. On the lines advanced, faintly seen in the white, sulphurous smoke; there was a pause, a cessation of fire; the smoke cleared away, and the parapets were blue with our men, who fired their muskets in the air, and shouted so that we actually heard them, or felt that we did. Fort McAllister was taken."

CHAP. XX.

Dec. 13, 1864.

Sherman,
"Memoirs."
Vol. II.,
pp. 197, 198.

Sherman, without losing a moment's time, took a boat and pushed out to sea to visit General Foster, who, on account of the breaking out of an old wound, was unable to visit him. He also visited Admiral Dahlgren on his flagship, the *Harvest Moon*, and having arranged with these officers for assistance and supplies, he returned to Fort Mc-

CHAP. XX. Allister. The capture of this important work had
Dec. 13, 1864. placed his right wing upon impregnable ground,
and assured permanently and perfectly his communications with the fleet.

At this moment, when all his energies and all his resources should have been free for operations on his left against Savannah, he was thrown into great perplexity by dispatches from General Grant. An aide-de-camp arrived on the 14th with a letter from the Lieutenant-General, somewhat indefinite in terms; but it was followed, on the next day, by one written on the 6th, saying: "I have concluded that the most important operation toward closing out the rebellion will be to close out Lee and his army."

Sherman,
"Memoirs,"
Vol. II.,
p. 205.

Ibid., p. 206.

Ibid.

He therefore suggested that Sherman should establish a base on the seacoast, leaving there all his artillery and cavalry, and with the rest of his army come north, by water, with all dispatch. "The contents of these letters," says Sherman, "gave me great uneasiness, for I had set my heart on the capture of Savannah, which I believed to be practicable and to be near; for me to embark for Virginia by sea was so complete a change from what I had supposed would be the course of events that I was very much concerned." Slocum had already occupied Argyle Island and the upper end of Hutchison Island, and had a brigade on the South Carolina shore opposite, and was urging that he might be permitted to pass one of his corps to the north side of the Savannah to operate against Hardee's communications with South Carolina.

But Sherman, feeling hampered by Grant's orders, supposing that a fleet of vessels would soon be pouring in ready to convey his army to Virginia,

instead of acting at once with his usual energy against Hardee, set about preparing the ground around Fort McAllister for the fortified camp which Grant had directed him to establish. Betaking himself to his pen, which he handled with as much ease and alacrity as his sword, he wrote, on the 17th of December, a summons to Hardee for the surrender of Savannah. He assured him that he had sufficient means for the reduction of Savannah, that he had guns that could cast heavy and destructive shot to the heart of the city; that he held and controlled every avenue by which Savannah could be supplied, and was, therefore, justified in demanding its surrender. Had his note ended there, it would have been liable to no criticism, except ineffectiveness; but he closed by the threat, that if forced to assault, he should feel justified in resorting to the harshest measures, and should make little effort to restrain his army. He inclosed, as a final blunder, a copy of Hood's demand for the surrender of Resaca, in which, it will be remembered, that indiscreet warrior had threatened to put the garrison to the sword, and on his demand being refused had marched away from the place; Sherman thus suggesting a historical parallel which he should have avoided at any cost.

CHAP. XX.

Sherman,
"Memoirs,"
Vol. II.,
pp. 210, 211.

Hardee answered with great calmness and propriety, denying all General Sherman's premises, and refusing to surrender the town. In reply to the menace of Sherman, Hardee said: "I have hitherto conducted the military operations intrusted to my direction in strict accordance with the rules of civilized warfare, and I should deeply regret the adoption of any course by you that may

Ibid., p. 211.

CHAP. XX. force me to deviate from them in future." Sherman now resolved, in consideration of the short time allowed him by his understanding of Grant's orders, to assault the place; but, in view of the difficulty of the ground, the only avenues of approach being narrow causeways, running across inundated rice-fields, he determined to make a final effort to invest the city completely, so that in case of success Hardee's entire army might be captured. The only avenue by which Hardee remained in communication with South Carolina was the Union causeway, connecting his pontoon bridge with the outlying works at Grahamsville, which had been thus far held successfully against Foster by the Georgia militia.

1864.

Sherman visited Foster again to request him to move Hatch's division down to Bluffton, a point from which it might reach the Union causeway, fortify, and hold it. Foster at once engaged to perform this work, and Sherman returned, after a tedious trip, so delayed by contrary winds and low tides that it was evening on the 21st of December before he arrived at his camp. The startling news that awaited him was that Hardee had successfully evacuated Savannah. During the night of the 20th and the morning of the 21st, he had marched his garrison over the pontoon bridge and northward along the Union causeway, undisturbed by Foster's troops. He had carried away his men and his light artillery, but had destroyed his ironclads and the navy yard, leaving, however, Savannah, a rich prize in itself, and made still richer in spoil of every kind. So quietly was the change in the government of the city effected, that

a blockade runner, which had eluded the fleet outside, steamed up to the wharf unconscious of danger, and its captain did not learn he had lost his vessel until he presented his papers at the Custom-House.

CHAP. XX.

Though somewhat disappointed at Hardee's escape, whatever chagrin Sherman may have felt speedily passed away in view of the enormous importance of the acquisition he had made. Riding into Savannah he sent a brief dispatch to the President in these words: "I beg to present to you as a Christmas gift the city of Savannah, with 150 heavy guns and plenty of ammunition; also about 25,000 bales of cotton." His gratification was increased by the receipt a few days later of letters from Grant and Halleck, full of generous and unqualified praise for his great campaign, and what was still more grateful to his feelings, an absolute revocation of the orders to proceed North by sea. General Halleck said: "General Grant's wishes . . . are that this whole matter of your future actions should be left entirely to your own discretion." Grant said, "If you capture the garrison of Savannah it certainly will compel Lee to detach from Richmond or give us nearly the whole South. My own opinion is that Lee is averse to going out of Virginia; and if the cause of the South is lost he wants Richmond to be the last place surrendered. If he has such views, it may be well to indulge him until we get everything else in our hands." He closed by congratulating Sherman upon the splendid results of his campaign, "the like of which is not read of in past history." To crown the year's work with the most transcendent gratification possible to a soldier, came also letters

Sherman to
Lincoln,
Dec. 22,
1864. MS.

Halleck to
Sherman,
Dec. 16,
1864.
Report
Committee
on Conduct
of the War.
Supple-
ment,
Part I.,
p. 286.

Grant to
Sherman,
Dec. 18,
1864.
Ibid., p. 287.

CHAP. XX. detailing the check inflicted upon Hood at Franklin, and the glorious victory at Nashville, where Thomas had utterly broken in pieces the last invading army of the Confederates in the West. This was to Sherman the final vindication of his great campaign, proving, as he held, that "his army had been properly divided, and that each part was duly proportioned to its work."

Appendix,
"Globe,"
Jan. 10,
1865, p. 158.

Congress passed at once a joint resolution tendering the thanks of the nation "to Major-General William T. Sherman, and through him to the officers and men under his command for their gallantry and good conduct in their late campaign from Chattanooga to Atlanta, and the triumphal march thence through Georgia to Savannah terminating in the capture and occupation of that city." But no expression of appreciation and of gratitude equaled in the mind of Sherman the letter with which the President acknowledged the receipt, on Christmas Eve, of his dispatch from Savannah, for Mr. Lincoln in this remarkable letter gave to Sherman, as he had given to Grant after Vicksburg, the inestimable assurance that the credit of the victory was exclusively his own; that the Government claimed no part in it.

"MY DEAR GENERAL SHERMAN: Many, many thanks for your Christmas gift, the capture of Savannah. When you were about leaving Atlanta for the Atlantic coast I was anxious, if not fearful; but feeling that you were the better judge, and remembering that 'nothing risked, nothing gained,' I did not interfere. Now, the undertaking being a success, the honor is all yours, for I believe none of us went farther than to acquiesce. And taking the work of General Thomas into the count, as it

should be taken, it is, indeed, a great success. Not only does it afford the obvious and immediate military advantages, but in showing to the world that your army could be divided, putting the stronger part to an important new service, and yet leaving enough to vanquish the old opposing force of the whole — Hood's army — it brings those who sat in darkness to see a great light. But what next? I suppose it will be safe if I leave General Grant and yourself to decide. Please make my grateful acknowledgments to your whole army, officers and men."

CHAP. XX.

Lincoln to
Sherman,
Dec. 26,
1864. MS.

Upon this letter General Sherman may safely rest his claim to the glory of the march to the sea. It would be a fruitless toil to examine and refute the claims which are made by the friends of other generals that Sherman only adopted and executed the original thought of somebody else. It is not to be questioned that many other people had thought of marching through the center of the Confederacy. Hunter had proposed to march a column westward from Hilton Head; Burnside, while at Knoxville, had suggested to Halleck that he should be allowed to move by Bragg's flank to Atlanta, "destroy the enemy's communications, . . . and thence move to such a place on the coast, where cover can be obtained, as shall be agreed upon with you. It is proposed to take no trains, but live upon the country. . . ." But it is idle to multiply these quotations from the men who imagined such a march. There were men before Columbus who dreamed of sailing west to find India. The glory and honor belong of right to the man who translates the vague thought into sub-

Sept. 30.
1863.

CHAP. XX. stantial achievement. General Sherman has the right to have his own account of the ripening of this plan in his mind implicitly accepted. He says: "As soon as Hood had shifted across from Lovejoy's to Palmetto, I saw the move in my 'mind's eye,' and after Jeff. Davis's speech at Palmetto of September 26, I was more positive in my conviction, but was in doubt as to the time and manner. When General Hood first struck our railroad above Marietta we were not ready, and I was forced to watch his movements further till he had 'carromed' off to the west, of Decatur. Then I was perfectly convinced, and had no longer a shadow of doubt. The only possible question was as to Thomas's strength and ability to meet Hood in the open field. I did not suppose that General Hood, though rash, would venture to attack fortified places like Allatoona, Resaca, Decatur, and Nashville; but he did so, and in so doing he played into our hands perfectly."

Sherman,
"Memoirs."
Vol. II.,
p. 167.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN